

First Criminal Charges Brought against E-Waste Exporter

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On September 15, 2011, Colorado electronic waste recycler Executive Recycling was indicted in the United States District Court for the District of Colorado. The charges include wire fraud, mail fraud, failure to file notification of intent to export hazardous waste, and exportation contrary to law. This case represents the first time the federal government has brought criminal charges against an e-waste exporter. Executive Recycling's owner and CEO, Brandon Richter, and company Vice President, Tor Olson, were also charged.

Executive Recycling was registered with the Colorado Department of Health and Environment as a "Large Quantity Handler of Universal Waste." The government alleges a significant portion of the e-waste collected by Executive Recycling consisted of Cathode Ray Tubes (CRTs), which have a high lead content and are commonly found in computers and television monitors. According to the indictment, Executive Recycling represented to its clients that e-waste would be recycled in the United States in an environmentally friendly manner. Instead, Executive Recycling shipped the e-waste to China and other countries. The government estimates the defendants made more than \$1,800,000 on this scheme.

The indictment is the culmination of a nearly three-year government investigation. Trial is set to begin on January 30, 2012.