



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER REPUBLIC POSTMASTER PLEADS GUILTY TO MISAPPROPRIATING POSTAL FUNDS

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Beth Phillips, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that the former postmaster for the Republic, Mo., Post Office pleaded guilty in federal court today to misappropriating postal funds.

Donna Rippee, 63, of Republic, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this morning to the charge contained in an April 1, 2009, federal indictment.

Rippee admitted that, between Jan. 1, 2002, and Feb. 7, 2008, she converted postal funds to her own use. **Rippee** admitted that she withdrew \$2,000 from the postal account held at the U.S. Post Office and purchased two \$1,000 money orders made payable to herself in an effort to cover up an approximately \$40,000 shortfall in another postal account under her control.

Under federal statutes, **Rippee** is subject to a sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000 and an order of restitution. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Randall D. Eggert. It was investigated by the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow/index.html