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News Release

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Postal worker sentenced to 37 months in federal prison for stealing reward certificates from the mail

MINNEAPOLIS – B. Todd Jones, United States Attorney for the District of Minnesota, announced today that a U.S. Postal Service (“USPS”) employee has been sentenced in federal court in St. Paul for stealing Best Buy Reward Zone certificates from the mail. On April 6, U.S. District Court Judge Donovan Frank sentenced Douglas A. Parkes, Jr., age 50, of St. Michael, to 37 months in prison on one count of theft of mail. Judge Frank also ordered Parkes to make full restitution to Best Buy. Parkes was charged with the crime on August 21, 2009, and pled guilty on September 17, 2009.

In his plea agreement, Parkes admitted that between June 2007 and October 2008, he took from the U.S. Postal Processing and Distribution Center in Minneapolis, where he worked, at least 15,799 Best Buy Reward Zone certificates addressed to no fewer than 12,009 different people. Parkes, who was employed as a U.S. Postal Service processing clerk and supervisor at the time, then used the certificates to buy \$194,210 worth of merchandise.

Following the sentencing, David A. Montoya, Special Agent in Charge of the Office of Inspector General (“OIG”) for the USPS’s Western Area Field Office, which investigated the case, said, “This sentence sends a clear message that stealing mail is a very serious crime and will not be tolerated. Theft by postal employees is a rarity; the overwhelming majority of USPS employees are honest, hardworking, and trustworthy individuals who would never consider the crime of stealing a customer’s mail. But when a postal employee, such as Mr. Parkes, betrays that trust, OIG special agents vigorously investigate those matters. Today’s sentencing reflects the continuing commitment of both the OIG and the U.S. Attorney’s Office to ensure the sanctity of the mail and bring to account those who violate the law.”

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kimberly A. Svendsen.