

Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
District of Maryland

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 21, 2018

## **Former U.S. Postal Service Letter Carrier Sentenced to Four Years in Federal Prison for a Drug Conspiracy**

### **Intercepted Packages of Cocaine Sent Through the U.S. Mail and Redirected the Packages to Co-conspirators**

Greenbelt, Maryland – U.S. District Judge George J. Hazel sentenced former U.S. Postal Service (USPS) letter carrier James Thomas Woodland, age 49, of Temple Hills, Maryland, to four years in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for conspiracy to distribute and possess with intent to distribute more than five kilograms of cocaine. The sentence was imposed on November 19, 2018.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Robert K. Hur; Postal Inspector in Charge Peter R. Rendina of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) - Washington Division; Special Agent in Charge Paul L. Bowman of the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General; and Chief J. Thomas Manger of the Montgomery County Police Department.

According to his plea agreement, from at least September 2016 through April 25, 2017, Woodland delivered drug-laden parcels coming from Nevada and California through the U.S. Mail, to his co-conspirators. On April 21, 2017, the U.S. Postal Inspection Service identified several USPS Priority Mail parcels which were suspected to contain illegal narcotics. On April 24, 2017, after a drug-detection canine positively alerted to the parcels, Inspectors obtained a warrant to search them.

Five of the parcels were addressed to five separate locations in Bethesda, Maryland, that were on the postal route assigned to Woodland. None of the names listed on the parcels were associated with the addresses on the parcels. Upon execution of the search warrant, Inspectors discovered that each of the parcels contained approximately one kilogram of cocaine. Each parcel was packaged the same, including a light-blue wax covering with a candle wick and the word "King's" or the shape of a

shamrock stamped into the vacuum-sealed cocaine brick. The estimated street value of the cocaine was \$187,600.

As detailed in Woodland's plea agreement, postal records confirm that the drug parcels Woodland intercepted often had the same or similar characteristics as the parcels that were interdicted on April 21, 2017. To alert Woodland that parcels were being sent, Woodland's co-conspirators typically sent Woodland a text message containing (in whole or part) the address on Woodland's route and/or a fictional name (i.e., a name not associated with the address on Woodland's route). Woodland admitted that when the parcel(s) arrived at the Bethesda Post Office for delivery, he retrieved the parcel(s), notified his co-conspirators by call or text message that he had the parcel(s), marked the parcel(s) as "delivered" using his USPS scanner, and then redirected the parcel(s) to his co-conspirators.

United States Attorney Robert K. Hur praised the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General, and the Montgomery County Police Department for their work in the investigation. Mr. Hur thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ray D. McKenzie and Timothy F. Hagan, who prosecuted the case.

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