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## NEWS



May 14, 2014

### **FEDERAL EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING GOVERNMENT PROPERTY FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS**

Deirdre M. Daly, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that VENITA GODFREY-SCOTT, 47, of New Haven, waived her right to indictment and pleaded guilty today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Donna F. Martinez in Hartford to one count of theft of government property, which she used for various home improvement projects.

According to court documents and statements made in court, GODFREY-SCOTT was employed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ("VA") at the Medical Center in West Haven as a supervisor in the Facilities Management Service, which is responsible for carpentry, paint, locks, doors, and other minor construction projects at the Medical Center. From approximately 2010 until 2013, GODFREY-SCOTT directed VA employees that she supervised to perform home improvement projects at her private residence, including a deck in her backyard, carpet installation, and various kitchen, bathroom and basement improvements. GODFREY-SCOTT directed the employees to use materials, supplies, tools, and vehicles belonging to the VA, and also had the employees purchase necessary materials at local stores using her government-issued credit card. Some of the projects were performed during regular work hours.

The total loss to the government as a result of GODFREY-SCOTT's criminal conduct is estimated to be between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

GODFREY-SCOTT is scheduled to be sentenced by U.S. District Judge Robert N. Chatigny in Hartford on August 4, 2014, at which time she faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years and a fine of up to \$250,000.

This case is being investigated by the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General, the Department of Veterans Affairs Police and the General Services Administration, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, New England Regional Investigations Office in Boston. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Neeraj N. Patel.

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