



U.S. Department of Justice

*United States Attorney
Eastern District of New York*

*271 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York 11201*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 29, 2009

Contact:

**Robert Nardoza
United States Attorney's Office
(718) 254-6323**

PRESS RELEASE

**LAWRENCE AVIATION INDUSTRIES, INC.'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER GERALD COHEN SENTENCED FOR ILLEGALLY STORING
HAZARDOUS WASTE ON LONG ISLAND**

***CEO Sentenced to One Year and One Day of Imprisonment
and Restitution Totaling \$105,816 Imposed***

Gerald Cohen, the Chief Executive Officer of a former Long Island aeronautics company was sentenced today to one year and one day of imprisonment and ordered to pay \$105,816 in restitution for illegally storing more than 12 tons of hazardous waste at his company's facility in Port Jefferson Station, New York in a proceeding today before United States District Judge Denis R. Hurley, at the United States Courthouse in Central Islip, New York. Sentencing of the company, Lawrence Aviation Industries, Inc. (LAI), was adjourned until June 5, 2009 to determine LAI's ability to pay a fine. In that proceeding, the court will also determine whether a fine should be imposed on Cohen.

In July 2008, Cohen and LAI both pleaded guilty to felony violations of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). As part of their guilty pleas, the defendants admitted that they knowingly and intentionally stored 11,690 kilograms of highly corrosive waste in two tanks at the Port Jefferson Station site, where the company once manufactured titanium sheets for the aeronautics industry.

The sentences were announced by Benton J. Campbell, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; William Lometti, Special Agent-in-Charge, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Criminal Investigation Division, New York; Pete Grannis, Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC); and Joseph M. Demarest, Jr., Assistant Director-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office.

"As this case demonstrates, we are committed to the vigorous enforcement of our

environmental laws,” stated United States Attorney Campbell. “Those who threaten our environment and our communities by abandoning chemical waste will be held accountable.” In July 2008, United States Attorney Campbell announced the formation of a district-wide task force comprised of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to bring renewed focus to the prosecution of environmental crimes.

“Hazardous wastes must be stored safely and legally in order to avoid becoming Superfund sites like LAI,” said EPA Special Agent-in-Charge Lometti, “Those who refuse to comply with the law and put the public and the environment at risk will be vigorously prosecuted.”

DEC Commissioner Grannis stated, “For years, this company illegally stored hazardous waste in blatant violation of environmental laws meant to protect the public. Forcing the company and its chief executive to pay a stiff price for their actions not only holds them accountable but also serves as a strong deterrent to others who might consider ignoring the law.”

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge Demarest stated, “Enforcement of our environmental laws is essential not just because improper handling of hazardous materials poses a threat to the environment. Improper handling of hazardous materials also poses a serious threat to public safety. First and foremost, we’re about protecting people.”

In a separate civil action brought under the federal Superfund statute against LAI, Cohen, and six parcels of land, the United States is seeking to recover more than \$8 million in clean-up costs previously incurred by the EPA at LAI’s manufacturing facility and a judgment of liability for future clean-up costs to be incurred at the LAI site.

The government’s criminal case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Richard T. Lunger.

The Defendants:

LAWRENCE AVIATION INDUSTRIES, INC.
Sheep Pasture Road, Port Jefferson, NY

GERALD COHEN
Age: 75