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CBP, ICE release report on 2011 counterfeit seizures

WASHINGTON — Theft of American intellectual property is a serious crime, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced today that their vigorous, ongoing efforts to protect America from the trade in counterfeit and pirated goods during fiscal year (FY) 2011 resulted in 24,792 seizures, a 24 percent increase over 2010.

Many fake goods seriously threaten the health and safety of American consumers and our national security. With this in mind, CBP and ICE continued to step up enforcement against these dangerous products resulting in a 44 percent increase in the number of seizures of health and safety products that could have harmed Americans. The value of these seizures soared to more than \$60 million due to increases in pharmaceutical and perfume seizures.

Despite the significant increase in the number of seizures, the domestic value for seizures in fiscal year 2011 decreased by five percent to \$178.9 million and the manufacturer's suggested retail price declined slightly to \$1.1 billion. This is primarily due to a shift toward using international mail, express courier, and consolidated shipping services to import counterfeit and pirated goods.

"The growth of websites selling counterfeit goods directly to consumers is one reason why CBP and ICE have seen a significant increase in the number of seizures at mail and express courier facilities," said Acting CBP Commissioner David V. Aguilar. "Although these websites may have low prices, what they do not tell consumers is that the true costs to our nation and consumers include lost jobs, stolen business profits, threats to our national security, and a serious risk of injury to consumers."

"I'm very proud of the unrelenting efforts of the ICE-led National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center and our law enforcement partners," said ICE Director John Morton. "IP enforcement is a high priority for ICE and CBP because the trade in counterfeit and pirated goods robs Americans of jobs and puts their safety at risk, costs legitimate businesses billions of dollars in revenue, and fuels criminal activity. In fiscal year 2012, ICE and CBP will continue to focus on keeping these goods off the streets and bring those responsible for producing and distributing them to justice."

China continues to be the number one source country for counterfeit and pirated goods seized, accounting for 62 percent or \$124.7 million of the total domestic value of seizures.

For the first time since FY 2005, footwear was not the top commodity seized in fiscal year 2011. Consumer electronics were the top commodity seized, and approximately one-third of this category was represented by IPR infringing cellular phones.

The top 10 categories of IPR-infringing products seized were pharmaceuticals, health/personal care, eyewear/parts, critical technology components, electronic articles, cigarettes, perfumes/colognes, batteries, exercise equipment and transportation/parts.

As the federal agency responsible for the management, control and protection of U.S. borders, CBP is on the frontline of IPR enforcement. The men and women of CBP protect our nation's economy, the safety of its people, and our national security against harm from counterfeit and pirated goods. The continued vigilance of CBP personnel protects United States citizens and businesses every day.

As the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) plays a leading role in targeting criminal organizations responsible for producing, smuggling, and distributing counterfeit products. ICE HSI focuses not only on keeping counterfeit products off our streets, but also on dismantling the criminal organizations behind such illicit activity.

The National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) is one of the U.S. government's key weapons in the fight against criminal counterfeiting and piracy. The IPR Center uses the expertise of its 19 member agencies to share information, develop initiatives, coordinate enforcement actions, and conduct investigations related to IP theft. Through this strategic interagency partnership, the IPR Center protects the public's health and safety, the U.S. economy and the war fighters.

To report IP theft or to learn more about the IPR Center, visit www.IPRCenter.gov.

View the [annual IPR seizure report](#).

<http://www.ice.gov/news/releases/1201/120109washingtondc.htm>