



The City of New York
BUSINESS INTEGRITY COMMISSION
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Michael J. Mansfield
Commissioner/Chair

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**BUSINESS INTEGRITY COMMISSION UNDERCOVER OPERATION NABS
TRANSFER STATION OWNER ILLEGALLY PURCHASING RECYCLABLES**

Business Integrity Commission Commissioner/Chair Michael J. Mansfield announced today that an undercover enforcement initiative conducted late last week in Queens County resulted in the charging of Michael A. Cristina who is the owner of a recyclables transfer station that was illegally purchasing cardboard. The theft of cardboard has become an endemic problem throughout the City of New York; it deprives legitimate, licensed trade waste haulers of much needed revenue and results in increased costs to the City's small businesses. Enforcement directed at transfer stations that accept stolen cardboard eliminates the market for such stolen commodities and is a vital step in combating such theft.

Commissioner Mansfield stated, "This undercover operation is part of a larger initiative to eliminate the organized and systematic theft of cardboard in New York City. The removal of these valuable commodities from the waste stream results in increased costs to small businesses and harms the City's licensed carters. Our initiative targets the transfer stations that illegally accept the 'stolen' recyclables and reflects the Commission's commitment to use its regulatory and law-enforcement resources to promote fair competition and protect legitimate businesses in the New York City trade waste industry."

In this operation, Commission personnel posed as employees of a cardboard carting company and sold cardboard to Empire State Cardboard Paper Recycling ("Empire") without the proper license. When the recyclables transfer station purchased the cardboard, Michael A. Cristina, the owner of Empire, was issued a criminal court summons for operating a recyclable transfer station which did not properly ensure that it was purchasing commodities from carting

companies licensed by the Business Integrity Commission. Due to the high price of commodities, including cardboard, private carting companies often pay or charge no fee to commercial establishments to remove their cardboard. When unlicensed carters steal a commercial establishments cardboard, the licensed carter is deprived of the revenue from the sale of commodity and this cost may ultimately be passed on to the customer.

While at the location, BIC Investigators observed Dielimady Diabate, an unlicensed carter, attempt to sell a large quantity of cardboard at Empire. Mr. Diabate was issued a violation from the BIC for illegal trade waste removal activity.

This investigation was conducted by Commission Investigators Edward Miranda, Gabriel Seda, Jesse Strauss, Dominick Albergo, Nelson Cortes & Department of Sanitation Lieutenant Thomas O'Brien under the supervision of the BIC Director of Investigations Lieutenant Christopher Mahon and Assistant Commissioner John Curry.

All criminal charges are merely accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

<u>Defendant</u>	<u>Charge</u>	<u>Return Date</u>
Michael A. Cristina	NYC A/C §16-118(7)(d)	January 4, 2010