



Sonoma County District Attorney



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Press Release

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PLUMBER ADMITS STEALING OVER \$1 MILLION THROUGH REAL ESTATE LOAN FRAUD AND ELDER FRAUD

District Attorney Stephan Passalacqua announced today that Juan Carlos Alcala, age 32, of Windsor, plead no contest to nineteen felony counts and admitted three special allegations for defrauding real estate investors, money laundering, and elder fraud. By his pleas, Alcala admitted that the total loss resulting from his criminal activity exceeded \$1,000,000.00. Alcala faces a maximum sentence of twenty-five years in prison and a fine of up to \$2,000,000.00. Alcala entered his pleas today after Sonoma County Superior Court Judge Gary Medvivy indicated that he would sentence him to no more than seven years in prison for these crimes. The defendant will be sentenced in Department Four on March 24, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

District Attorney Passalacqua said, "Law enforcement is working together to bring to justice those who commit investment scams and particularly those who target our elders."

The charges in this case arose out of an investigation which began when an undeveloped Healdsburg property, owned by Mr. Alcala, went into foreclosure and several investors, who had funded mortgages for Mr. Alcala on the property, discovered that he had secured the mortgages using forged documents and false information. Alcala's fraudulent use of documents resulted in an inflated appraisal of the property, which was relied upon by various investors in three different real estate transactions. After the real estate loan fraud was reported to law enforcement, and after the land had been foreclosed upon, Mr. Alcala attempted to sell the

land, no longer owned by him, to a Sonoma County Sheriff's Detective who was working undercover. Further investigation revealed that Mr. Alcala was laundering the money he had received from the real estate loans.

While law enforcement was investigating the real estate loan fraud case, Sheriff's Detectives also discovered that Alcala had stolen approximately \$450,000 from an 80-year-old Sebastopol woman by convincing her to invest in a home improvement project that never actually occurred. Over the course of approximately three years, Alcala convinced the elder adult to give him almost \$200,000 in cash and to take out three mortgages on a home that she had owned outright. Much of the money stolen from the elder victim was laundered through Alcala's bank accounts as well. Mr. Alcala met the elder victim when he was hired as a plumber to do some work around her home.

Sonoma County Sheriff's Detective James Naugle was the investigating officer who spearheaded the investigation in this matter and Deputy District Attorney Robin Hammond is the prosecutor assigned to the case.