



# Department of Justice

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## **OWNER OF CLARK'S AUTO SALES SENTENCED FOR DEALING IN ILLEGAL EXPLOSIVES AND FALSIFYING TAX RETURNS**

DAYTON – Earl Clark, 40, of Franklin, Ohio, was ordered to forfeit two bank accounts containing \$353,211.91 and \$33,388.14, plus \$21,524 in U.S. currency, nine automobiles, and a trailer, and to pay \$80,000 in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for committing violations of money laundering, dealing in explosives without a license, and willfully filing a false federal income tax return with the IRS, relative to his ownership of Clark's Auto Sales. Clark was also sentenced to serve 12 months and one day in prison, 3 years of supervised release, and fined \$10,000.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Darryl Williams, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office; Robin Shoemaker, Special Agent in Charge, Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and members of the Warren County Drug Task Force, announced the sentence handed down by U.S. District Judge Thomas M. Rose.

According to court documents, Earl Clark has owned and operated Clark's Auto Sales since 2004. Clark assisted several individuals in concealing their assets, which represented the proceeds of illegal drug sales. Between 2007 and October 2010, Clark sold cars to individuals he knew as "dope boys," a term to describe people engaged in the sale of illegal narcotics. Clark titled these cars in the names of individuals other than the drug dealers in order to help conceal ownership of the vehicles, and he placed false liens of the vehicles, in efforts to prevent law enforcement from trying to seize the property as proceeds of drug trafficking.

Clark laundered the proceeds from the illegal auto sales by depositing cash, totaling between \$120,000 and \$200,000, into his bank account.

Clark also sold illegal fireworks between June 2009 and June 2010 from his auto dealership, an activity which constitutes explosives dealing under Federal law. Clark did not have a license to distribute, possess, or sell these explosive materials.

In addition, Clark earned significant income between 2004 and 2009 from the sale of fireworks and explosive materials but failed to report some of that income on his federal tax returns. Clark willfully failed to report at least \$80,000 in income per year during each of these tax periods, resulting in a tax loss to the IRS in excess of \$80,000.

Darryl Williams, Special Agent in Charge, IRS, Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office stated, "Not only was Earl Clark sentenced to significant jail time, but the government seized a significant portion of the illegal proceeds through asset forfeiture. IRS, Criminal Investigation is

proud to provide its financial expertise as we work alongside our law enforcement partners to bring criminals to justice.”

Stewart commended the cooperative investigation by agents of the IRS Criminal Investigation, ATF, DEA, and the Warren County Drug Task Force, along with Assistant U.S. Attorney Brent Tabacchi, who is prosecuting this case.

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