



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Note: Audio comments from U.S. Attorney Todd P. Graves will be available in MP3 format upon request, and may be downloaded after 5 a.m. tomorrow from the district's Web site at www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow.

FORMER PARAMEDIC INDICTED FOR DILUTING AMBULANCE PAINKILLERS

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a former paramedic who worked for several Northland ambulance services was indicted by a federal grand jury today for diluting pain-relieving drugs supplied to an ambulance service in Pleasant Valley, Mo.

Craig J. Starr, 39, of Liberty, Mo., was charged in a 10-count indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Kansas City. **Starr** formerly worked as a paramedic for ambulance services in Pleasant Valley, Liberty and Claycomo.

The federal indictment alleges that, on 10 separate occasions between Sept. 12, 2002, and Jan. 13, 2003, **Starr** tampered with Demerol 100mg/ml carpjects by removing a quantity of the pain-relieving drug from the carpjects and substituting another substance in its place, thereby reducing the potency and strength of the drug. In each instance, the indictment alleges that **Starr's** action was done with reckless disregard for, and extreme indifference to, the risk that another person would be placed in danger of death or bodily injury.

All counts of the alleged tampering, Graves added, involved painkillers supplied to ambulances serving Pleasant Valley.

Three counts of the federal indictment allege that, as a result of **Starr's** tampering, the potency and strength of the Demerol in the carpjects was reduced from 100mg/ml to an undetectable amount. Seven counts of the federal indictment allege that, as a result of **Starr's** tampering, the potency and strength of the Demerol in the carpjects was reduced from

100mg/ml to 10mg/ml.

Graves cautioned that the charges contained in the indictment are simply accusations, and not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charges must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregg R. Coonrod. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Missouri Department of Health Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Liberty, Mo., Police Department, the Pleasant Valley, Mo., Police Department, and the Claycomo, Mo., Police Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow