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**FORMER CHARLES COUNTY POSTMASTER PLEADS GUILTY
TO STEALING STAMPS**

Greenbelt, Maryland - Gilbert Ennis, age 56, of Lanham, Maryland, pleaded guilty today to stealing \$59,958.21 in postal stamps from the Marbury Post Office in Charles County where he was the postmaster. As part of his plea agreement, Ennis has agreed to resign from the U.S. Postal Service and pay restitution of \$59,958.21 from his federal retirement account.

The guilty plea was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein, Special Agent in Charge Joanne Yarbrough of the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General and Charles County Sheriff Rex Coffey.

“Theft of postal funds is a serious crime. Most postal employees would never think of taking a dime from the Postal Service. But when an individual steals money from the Postal Service, OIG Special Agents work quickly to bring an end to the criminal activity,” said Special Agent in Charge Joanne Yarbrough.

According to Ennis’ plea agreement, on November 23, 2009, Ennis called the Charles County Sheriff’s Office and reported that he had been alone in the postal office that afternoon when a man carrying a gun entered the building, demanded that he open the safe and then ordered Ennis to get into the bathroom and close the door. Ennis told the sheriff and the postal inspector that a green box in the safe containing over \$50,000 in postal stamp stock was stolen. A postal audit concluded that the amount of stamp stock stolen from the safe was \$57,989.40.

Investigators began to doubt Ennis’ robbery report, however, when they found a green box identical to the one reported stolen in Ennis’ car. Further investigation revealed that Ennis could not have seen the robbers leaving the parking lot, as he reported, from the bathroom where he said he was; and the door Ennis said the robber entered from was deadbolted and could not be opened from the outside without a key. Investigators also found Postal Service money orders in the box in Ennis’ car; confirmed that \$50,000 of stamp stock could not have fit inside the box that Ennis claimed was stolen; and determined that \$1,968.81 in stamps were missing from Ennis’ drawer.

Ennis faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. U.S. District Judge Roger W. Titus has scheduled sentencing for December 6, 2010 at 3:00 p.m.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the U.S. Postal Service, Office of Inspector General and the Charles County Sheriff's Office for their assistance in the investigation. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant United States Attorney Hollis Raphael Weisman, who is prosecuting the case.