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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 15, 2005
#05-31

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TWO DICKSON MEN PLEAD GUILTY IN ILLEGAL LANDFILL DUMPING

A Dickson man pleaded guilty to illegal dumping and will be required to pay restitution for damage he caused by disposing of hazardous materials in a landfill in Dickson County today. His relative pleaded guilty two weeks ago for his part in the matter.

Kenny Bush agreed to pay restitution to the landfill owners after pleading guilty to charges of felony environmental vandalism and illegal disposal of a toxic substance, both Class C felonies. Bush was sentenced to three years, but the sentence was suspended upon his agreement to pay restitution. The amount of restitution will be determined by the court at a later date.

Bush's relative, Ricky Spenser, pleaded guilty in the case two weeks ago, but was placed on probation with the agreement he would testify against Bush at trial.

The pair were charged in connection with the illegal dumping of steel drums filled with Benzene, a cleaning solvent known to cause cancer, on a property located near the Dickson County landfill. Disposal of the toxic liquid must be done with an Environmental Protection Agency permit in an approved location. Charges against the men came after an investigation conducted by the Department of Environment and Conservation, Dickson County District Attorney Dan Alsobrooks and this office.

Bush and Spenser were paid to haul off materials from a nearby boat factory when the illegal dumping occurred. The area in which the materials were dumped has also been the location of a number of well contamination cases. They are believed to have been contaminated by the landfill.

"We are satisfied with this agreement," Attorney General Summers said. "We hope this will send a message to others about illegal dumping, especially involving toxic materials."

"It's critical that we hold the appropriate parties responsible for acts that threaten the environmental health of our state and the quality of life of its citizens," said Environment and Conservation Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan. "Both civil and criminal enforcement are important tools that help ensure compliance with the rules and laws of Tennessee that are designed to protect our environment."