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**Yacht Broker, Septic Tank Operator Plead Guilty to Felony Theft of Sales Tax**

**EVERETT**, Wash., Nov. 5, 2008 — Everett yacht broker Ronald J. Sperry and septic tank operator Jeffrey S. Rice both pled guilty today to felony theft of sales tax they collected from customers of their businesses.

Sperry, 59, admitted failing to remit nearly \$353,000 in sales tax he collected from late 2004 through 2007 on sales of yachts through his businesses, Everett Yacht Sales and Hanan Yachts.

Rice, 45, admitted keeping nearly \$6,900 in sales taxes he collected from customers in 2006 through his companies, AAA Sanitation LLC and American Septic Service, Inc.

Snohomish County Superior Court Judge Michael T. Downes postponed sentencing of both men for several months to give them time to begin making restitution. Their prison sentences will depend on the amount of restitution they make, but could be as high as 57 months.

Sperry acknowledged a debt of \$952,945 including interest and penalties, while Rice faces \$9,341 in restitution.

The charges were brought by the Criminal Justice Division of the Washington State Attorney General's Office at the request of the Washington State Department of Revenue.

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