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# Environmental Criminal Enforcement: Former Seattle, Washington, Barrel Cleaning/Reconditioning Plant Manager Pleads Guilty to Alleged Violations

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The United States Attorneys Office (Western District of Washington) issued a January 27th news release stating that John Sanft pleaded guilty in the U.S. District Court in Seattle to:

- Conspiracy
- Making a false statement to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”)

Mr. Sanft is described as a former plant manager of Seattle Barrel and Cooperage Company (“Company”).

The Company is described as a barrel cleaning and reconditioning operation. Its activities are stated to include collecting used industrial and commercial drums and reconditioning and selling them.

Mr. Sanft is stated to have been the Company’s plant manager during a conspiracy to illegally dump caustic waste into the King County sewer system. The Company allegedly:

- Used a hidden drain
- Lied to regulators to carry out the illegal dumping

The U.S. Attorneys Office news release indicates that the Company states that since mid-2019 it no longer uses caustic solution for barrel cleaning.

The plea agreement indicates that while Mr. Sanft knew of the existence of the hidden drain and that the Company was discharging through the hidden drain – he did not personally engage in the discharges or tell the employee to cause the discharges.

Mr. Sanft is stated to face up to five years in prison for each of the two charges to which he pleaded guilty.

A copy of the news release can be downloaded [here](#).