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## **L.A. CITY ATTORNEY ROCKY DELGADILLO FILES MULTIPLE CRIMINAL CASES IN TASK FORCE CRACKDOWN AGAINST FOUR UNLICENSED DENTISTS**

LOS ANGELES –Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo today announced his office has filed multiple criminal charges against four persons practicing dentistry without a license at three locations following undercover investigations of Los Angeles dental labs by a law enforcement task force.

Francisco Antonio Padilla, 48, operating a dental lab on Oxnard St. in North Hollywood, was charged with two counts of unlicensed practice of dentistry, one count of operating a business that furnishes or dispenses dangerous drugs and one count of unlawfully possessing a hypodermic needle.

Roque Luis Martinez, 46, the operator of C&L Dental Lab on Santa Monica Blvd. in Los Angeles, was charged with one count of unlicensed practice of dentistry and one count of operating a business that furnishes or dispenses dangerous drugs.

Abel Vasquez Velasco, 38, who practiced at R.G. Dental Lab on Whittier Blvd. in Los Angeles, was charged with one count of unlicensed practice of dentistry, one count of operating a business that furnishes or dispenses dangerous drugs and one count of unlawfully possessing a hypodermic needle.

Filiberto Galvan, 67 of Los Angeles, the owner of R.G. Dental Lab on Whittier Blvd. was jointly charged with Vasquez with one count of unlicensed practice of dentistry.

In all three cases, the Health Authority Law Enforcement Task Force (H.A.L.T.), comprised of the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles County Sheriff's office, and the State Department of Health, acted on anonymous tips about unlicensed dentistry taking place at Los Angeles dental labs. In October 2007, an undercover HALT Team officer visited each lab posing as a patient with a toothache, was examined by the unlicensed dentist, diagnosed, and recommended to have the aching tooth extracted.

Following each the undercover appointment, search warrants were obtained leading to the confiscation of dental supplies and equipment, as well as syringes at the offices of Padilla and Velasco. Some of the pharmaceuticals seized included Tetracycline, Efemolina, and Lidocaine.

Results of the investigation were forwarded by the H.A.L.T. Team to City Attorney Delgadillo's office for prosecution by Deputy City Attorney Mark Lambert.

Each count of practice of unlicensed dentistry carries a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine; each count of owning or operating a business that furnishes or dispenses dangerous drugs carries a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine; and each count of unlawfully possessing a hypodermic needle or syringe carries a maximum penalty of six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

Arrestment for both Padilla and Martinez is scheduled for January 24 in Division 81 of the Bauchet Street Criminal Court. Velasco is scheduled for arrestment in the same Division on February 6.

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