



Accused of making meth in various locations, including penthouse overlooking the UN

WABC Eyewitness News

(New York–WABC, Nov. 30, 2006) – A corporate executive, a Columbia University graduate student and auto mechanics were busted by federal agents for allegedly making methamphetamine in locations as diverse as a penthouse overlooking the United Nations and the repair bay of Potamkin Mitsubishi. Eyewitness News has learned the ten men were arrested during raids on nine methamphetamine labs on Wednesday.

Those ten suspects are free on bail after pleading not guilty to the charges on Thursday night.

It was all part of a six month investigation called Operation Red Fusion -- a collaboration of the Drug Enforcement Agency and other federal agencies. They tracked those 10 people who allegedly operated secret meth labs in four out of five boroughs and Long Island.

The common thread that gave them away: The Internet. All of the defendants allegedly purchased red phosphorus from the same place online. It is an ingredient for cooking meth.

Roslynn Mauskopf, U.S. Attorney: "You can buy whatever you want on the Internet these days, you can buy whatever you need to make meth on the Internet," an official said.

Officials say 35-year-old Michael Nibb, who works as Citibank's vice president for information processing, was charged with manufacturing the drug in his penthouse on East 39th Street.

"Nobody told anybody ... that's insane, they could have blown the whole building up!" a resident of the building told us.

Others arrested include 28-year-old Mehmetcan Dosemeci, a graduate student and teaching assistant at Columbia University who mixed methamphetamine to stay awake for tests.

According to reports, two mechanics at Potamkin Mitsubishi were charged with using the repair bays at the dealership to mix batches of methamphetamine for resale.

Cooking methamphetamines can produce poisonous gas, which is why drug agents use hazmat materials when they're out on drug raids.

The defendants, if convicted, face maximum prison terms of 10 to 20 years, and one of them is still on the loose.

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