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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**WOODSIDE MAN CHARGED WITH POSSESSING  
UNTAXED COUNTERFEIT CIGARETTES**

*Approximately 5,000 Cartons Of Cigarettes And \$96,000 In Cash  
Seized During Execution of Search Warrants*

Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a Woodside man has been charged with first-degree trademark counterfeiting and other charges following the seizure of approximately 5,000 cartons of cigarettes and \$96,000 in cash from an apartment, a garage and a video store – all located in Queens. Of the 5,000 untaxed cartons of cigarettes, approximately 1,700 cartons were counterfeit.

“Cigarette bootlegging is a multi-million dollar business that diverts much-needed tax revenue to the city and state during these tough economic times,” said District Attorney Brown. “In addition, the counterfeit cigarettes recovered in the course of this investigation pose an even greater health risk than most because they have bypassed U.S. safety inspections and regulations. They are of unknown origin and thought to possess extremely high levels of tar and nicotine, while being of incredibly poor and dangerous quality.”

The District Attorney noted that the arrest and seizure coincide with the annual Great American Smokeout held earlier this week, a day when Americans are urged to quit smoking to improve their health.

District Attorney Brown identified the defendant as Abdus Shahed, 31, of 41-46 68<sup>th</sup> Street, in Woodside, Queens. The defendant was arraigned last night before Queens Criminal Court Judge John Zoll on a criminal complaint charging him with first-degree trademark counterfeiting, first-degree criminal possession of a forged instrument, and violations of the New York State tax law. He was ordered held on \$25,000 bail and to return to court on December 13, 2011. He faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted.

The District Attorney said that an investigation into the illegal sale of untaxed and counterfeit cigarettes led investigators to the apartment of Abdus Shahed, located 41-46 68<sup>th</sup> Street, apartment 1B, in Woodside, on November 16, 2011, as well as to a garage located at 71-05 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a video store located at 37-65 74<sup>th</sup> Street, both located in Jackson Heights. A total of approximately 5,000 cartons of cigarettes and \$96,000 in cash was recovered.

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The investigation was conducted by Detective James Monaco of the New York City Police Department's Queens District Attorney's Squad under the supervision of Sergeant Francis Teran, Lieutenant Keith Gallagher and Captain John M. Zanfardino, and the overall supervision of Chief Louis M. Croce, Jr. and Chief of Detectives Phil T. Pulaski.

Assistant District Attorney Morgan A. Goulet, of the District Attorney's Economic Crimes Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Gregory C. Pavlides, Bureau Chief, and Christina Hanophy, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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**Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**