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Commercial Flooring Contractor Agrees to Plead Guilty to Antitrust Charge

First Corporate Charge Filed in Ongoing Commercial Flooring Investigation

PCI FlorTech Inc., an Illinois-based commercial flooring contractor, has been charged for its role in a long-running conspiracy to rig bids and fix prices for commercial flooring services and products sold in the United States, the Department of Justice announced today.

PCI FlorTech has agreed to plead guilty and pay a \$150,000 criminal fine for its role in the conspiracy and to cooperate in the Division's ongoing investigation. PCI FlorTech's charge follows the guilty plea of a former vice president of another commercial flooring contractor.

According to a one-count felony charge filed today in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois in Chicago, PCI FlorTech engaged in a conspiracy to suppress and eliminate competition in the commercial flooring market by submitting complementary bids to ensure that the designated company would win the bidding. PCI FlorTech participated in the conspiracy from at least as early as 2009 until at least June 2017.

"Today marks the first charge brought against a corporation for rigging bids and undermining the competitive process that consumers—including schools and charities—depend upon to get a competitive price for flooring," said Assistant Attorney General Makan Delrahim of the Department of Justice's Antitrust Division. "We will continue to investigate and prosecute contractors and their executives who cheat in the bidding process."

"PCI FlorTech illegally conspired to elevate bid prices, ultimately cheating the public out of the competitive pricing necessary to complete construction projects," said Special Agent in Charge Jeffrey S. Sallet, FBI Chicago. "This charge demonstrates that the FBI is committed to working with its government partners to hold contractors accountable when they attempt to profit at their community's expense."

A violation of the Sherman Act carries maximum penalties of a \$100 million criminal fine for corporations. The maximum fine may be increased to twice the gain derived from the crime or twice the loss suffered by the victims of the crime, if either of those amounts is greater than the statutory maximum fine.

The charges are the result of an ongoing federal antitrust investigation into bid rigging, price fixing, and other anticompetitive conduct in the commercial flooring industry, conducted by the Antitrust Division's Chicago Office and the FBI's Chicago Field Division.

Anyone with information on bid rigging, price fixing, or other anticompetitive conduct related to the commercial flooring industry should contact the Antitrust Division's Chicago Office at 312-984-7200 or visit <https://www.justice.gov/atr/contact/newcase.html>.

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