

516-767-1326

**OFFICE OF NEW YORK STATE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
ELIOT SPITZER**

**PRESS OFFICE
PHONE: 518-473-5525
FAX: 518-473-9907**

TO: Jim Mahoney

FROM: Marc Violette

NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: 2

COMMENTS

As requested.

Department of Law
120 Broadway
New York, NY 10271

Department of Law
The State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

News from Attorney General

Eliot Spitzer

Contact: Marc Violette
518-473-5525

For immediate release:
October 17, 2002

N.Y. SETTLES CASE WITH GEORGIA ON-LINE WEAPONS RETAILER

Action Bars Shipments of Stun Guns, Black Jacks and Kung Fu Throwing Stars

State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer today announced that a Georgia mail order company has agreed to stop sales and shipments of illegal weapons to New York consumers. In addition, the company will pay New York \$200,000 in penalties and costs for its violation of state laws prohibiting the sale of such weapons.

Illegal weapons sold by the company to customers in New York include electronic stun guns, gravity knives, cane swords, blackjacks, chuka sticks, slingshots and Kung Fu throwing stars. More than 4,500 such weapons were sold to New York customers over the past two years.

New York consumers who purchased illegal weapons from the company will be notified that they must turn any such weapons in to law enforcement agencies.

Spitzer made the announcement as he convened the annual state conference of Neighborhood Watch organizations and law enforcement officials at the state Capitol in Albany. Neighborhood Watch groups are dedicated to improving public safety in their communities.

"New Yorkers are properly concerned about their safety," said Spitzer. "Weapons like these, some of them easily concealed, others disguised as harmless objects, have no place on our streets or in our homes. Today's action should serve as fair notice to any other companies selling illegal weapons to New Yorkers to immediately bring their business practices in line with state law."

Today's announcement affects the sale and shipment of weapons from Bud-K Worldwide, Inc. (Bud-K), a martial arts weapons supplier with a retail store, warehouse, mail order and website sales operation in Moultrie, Georgia. The company's website is www.budkww.com

Between September 1999 and May 2002, Bud-K sold approximately \$1 million-worth of products to customers in New York through its mail order and website operations. Over \$100,000 of that total consisted of illegal weapons.

-more-

Bud-K did not sell firearms – such as handguns and rifles – to customers in New York.

Under terms of the settlement, Bud-K will:

- Publish prominent notices in its catalog and on its website specifying which products are illegal to possess in New York;
- Establish procedures to prevent it from selling and shipping illegal weapons to New York customers;
- Provide the Attorney General's office by Oct. 31, 2002 with a list of New York customers who purchased illegal weapons from the company;
- Deliver a written notice by Nov. 30, 2002 to all its New York customers who purchased illegal weapons from the company advising them to surrender those illegal weapons to law enforcement agencies; and,
- Pay New York \$198,000 in penalties and \$2,000 for the costs of the investigation.

The Attorney General's office began an investigation into Bud-K in October 2001 in response to a consumer who walked into the Attorney General's Rochester regional office with the company's catalog and asked if the weapons offered for sale were legal. A review of the catalog revealed that many of the products offered for sale by Bud-K were classified as illegal weapons in New York.

In April 2000, the Attorney General's office reached a similar resolution with Family Defense Products of Ocala, Florida for selling and shipping illegal weapons to customers in New York.

The Bud-K investigation was led by Assistant Attorney General Benjamin Bruce of the Attorney General's Rochester Regional Office with the assistance of Investigators Christopher Holland and Gordon Stewart.

#