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St. Joe Man Pleads Guilty in Rebate Case

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) - The St. Joseph owner of a solar energy installation company has pleaded guilty to federal charges accusing him of fraudulently claiming about \$1.4 million in rebates.

The office of the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Missouri says 38-year-old Richard Schonemann pleaded guilty Wednesday to one count of conspiracy and one count of false statements.

Schonemann was an owner of St. Joseph-based US Solar, which sold and installed solar-powered panel systems in northwest Missouri.

The plea agreement says US Solar and a co-conspirator obtained fraudulent state rebates by overstating the number of solar panels installed on several locations from December 2011 through June 2013.

Prosecutors also say US Solar received federal payments it was not eligible for, and made up numbers on the solar systems' reported output.

Associated Press