

U.S. Customs Seizes Multiple Shipments from China for Infringement of U.S. Intellectual Property Rights

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Last month, **U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)** import specialists and officers at the Port of Tacoma in the state of *Washington* seized shipments of goods from **China** that infringed U.S. trademarks, violated U.S. country of origin marking laws, and violated product safety standards of the **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)**. One of the shipments contained 120 pieces of furniture valued at \$720,000 that infringed U.S. trademarks. The second consisted of microphones and cables with a value of more than \$25,000 that were marked “Made & Manufactured in the U.S.A.” even though their outer cartons were marked “Made in China” and the commercial invoice and packing list specified China as the origin of the goods. The third shipment contained automotive headlamps valued at \$80,000 that were not in compliance with NHTSA standards. CBP is responsible for enforcing roughly 500 trade laws and regulations on behalf of 47 government agencies—for CBP, the prevention of imports of counterfeit products and illicit goods continues to be a priority trade issue.

With respect to intellectual property rights (IPR) enforcement, in particular, CBP routinely seizes counterfeit goods at the U.S. border, performs post-import audits of companies that have been charged with importing infringing goods, and collaborates closely with U.S. trade partners and partners with industry and other federal agencies to enhance enforcement. CBP also operates a Mobile Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Team comprised of specialists from the various Centers of Excellence and Expertise around the country, such as Apparel, Footwear, and Textiles; Automotive and Aerospace; Consumer Products and Mass Merchandising; Electronics; and, Machinery.

U.S. companies can, and are encouraged to, utilize CBP’s web-based tool, e-Recordation, to record their trademarks and copyrights, thereby enabling CBP officers and import specialists to identify and seize infringing merchandise before it enters U.S. commerce. In FY 2016, CBP reports that it seized more than 1,500 shipments of counterfeit merchandise valued at over \$33.2 million. The most frequently seized commodities fell into the following categories:

- Textile apparel and accessories
- Handbags and wallets

- Consumer electronics
- Optical media
- Footwear
- Computers and accessories
- Watches and jewelry
- Labels and tags
- Pharmaceuticals and personal care products
- Toys

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