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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Fond Du Lac County Men Charged in Connection with
Improper Disposal and Storage of Hazardous Waste**

FOND DU LAC, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Justice today announced that Leonard H. Hughes, 82, of Fond Du Lac, Wis. has been charged with transporting and storing hazardous waste without a license and Zachary T. Ballard, 25, of Brandon, Wis. has been charged for allegedly dumping fluorescent bulbs containing mercury into a stream on private property in Fond Du Lac County in August of 2022.

The criminal complaint, filed by the Wisconsin Department of Justice, alleges that Mr. Hughes used semi-trailers in the summer of 2022 to transport fluorescent bulbs that contained mercury. Some of the trailers contained bulbs with levels of mercury that qualified them as hazardous waste. The complaint alleges that Mr. Hughes hired Mr. Ballard to dispose of one of the trailers of bulbs on private property. According to the complaint, Mr. Ballard used heavy equipment to move the bulbs and push them into a stream on the property, breaking many of the bulbs in the process. The criminal complaint states that wardens with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) found two other semi-trailers at another Fond du Lac County location containing an estimated 30,000 fluorescent bulbs.

Mr. Hughes is charged with two counts of transporting hazardous waste without a license, two counts of obstructing a warden, one count of storing hazardous waste without a license, and one count of felony bail jumping. Mr. Ballard is charged with one count of depositing garbage, refuse, and deleterious substances into state waters, and one count of misdemeanor bail jumping.

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The charges in this case are merely accusations. As in any criminal case, the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

This investigation was led by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and is being prosecuted by the Wisconsin Department of Justice.