## Man Gets Prison For Tossing Urine At Jailers

ABERDEEN (AP) — A Sioux Falls man has been sentenced to prison for throwing urine at jailers while in the Brown County Jail.

The *Aberdeen News* reports that 26-year-old Carlos R. Green was sentenced on two charges of intentionally causing contact with bodily fluids. He was sentenced to two years in prison for each charge, to be served concurrently.

Green also allegedly clogged the toilet in his cell and used toilet paper to cover a video camera during the March 2011 incident.

In addition to the prison time, Green must pay more than $1,000 in restitution and court fees.

Green was earlier sentenced to 40 years in prison after pleading guilty to charges of aggravated assault and eluding law enforcement officers.

## S.D. Legislature Outlaws Synthetic Drugs

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature has given final approval to a bill that seeks to ban so-called synthetic marijuana and bath salt drugs.

The House voted 63-1 Wednesday to pass the bill, which has already been approved by the Senate. It will take effect as soon as Gov. Dennis Daugaard signs it.

The measure adds some of the synthetic drugs to the list of banned substances in South Dakota. It makes it a felony to possess or sell the synthetic drugs.

Law officers say some of the drugs are sold openly in a few stores. They say many people have developed psychiatric and medical problems after taking some of the drugs.

## Corps Awards $4.7M For Levee Repairs In Neb.

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The U.S Army Corps of Engineers has awarded a $4.7 million contract for levee repair work on the Missouri River south of Nebraska City.

The corps says the work will repair damage done during last summer's flooding on the levee, and includes repairing scour holes, constructing seepage berms and seeding. Work on the critical aspects is to be complete by March 1.

The corps says the project is aimed at reducing the flood risk for about 6 square miles, including the Omaha Public Power District's coal-fired power plant in Nebraska City.

The contract was awarded to Newt Marine Services in Dubuque, Iowa.

## Neb. Environmental Fund Control Under Debate

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Several Nebraska lawmakers say they should have the right to decide who gets grant money from the state environmental fund.

Two proposals debated Wednesday would take control of that money away from the Nebraska Attorney General's Office.

Questions about who should oversee the fund came up after a $100,000 grant was approved by Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning for an industry-backed farm group.

The bills were introduced by state Sens. Heath Mello of Omaha and Ken Haar of Malcolm, who say more people should have input in how that money is spent.

The fund is made up of money from state environmental fines and settlements.

# Trader Faces Criminal, SEC Charges

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — A foreign currency trader already hit with a multimillion-dollar civil judgment in South Dakota for allegedly defrauding hundreds of investors in a Ponzi scheme is now facing federal criminal and securities charges.

Jeffery A. Lowrance, 50, was arrested in Peru last February and extradited to the U.S. in July.

Lowrance is in federal custody in the Chicago area, charged with five counts of mail fraud, one count of wire fraud and four counts of money laundering in a scheme to bilk some 400 investors of more than $25 million.

He pleaded not guilty in July, and a case status hearing is scheduled for Friday, said Jacqueline Stern, an assistant U.S. attorney in the northern district of Illinois.

Mary Judge, a federal public defender representing Lowrance in the Illinois case, did not return a telephone call seeking comment.

In September 2009, U.S. District Court of South Dakota Judge Karen Schreier issued a $42 million default judgment against Lowrance, who never showed up in court or responded to the lawsuit filed by 199 plaintiffs. Schreier later approved punitive damages of three times that amount for an additional $136 million.

The plaintiffs, including five from South Dakota. accused Lowrance and his New Zealand-based First Capital Savings & Loan of fraud, breach of contract and fraudulent mismanagement of offshore foreign currency exchange accounts.

The suit said Lowrance failed to make live market trades, transferred money from one client's account to another to keep up the appearance of earnings, and used proceeds for personal gain and other business ventures, including an alternative newspaper he started called USA Tomorrow.

In addition to the Illinois criminal case, Lowrance now faces civil fraud charges from the Securities and Exchange Commission, which accuses him of raising $21 million from investors in at least 26 states by promising huge profits.

The SEC said Lowrance targeted investors by purporting to share their Christian values and limited-government political views. First Capital promised huge profits, the agency said, but actually did little foreign currency trading and lost money on the few transactions it conducted.

Michael Dicke, associate regional director in the SEC's San Francisco office, said the agency has filed a motion for default judgment because Lowrance hasn't responded in court.

Asked if Lowrance and First Capital had any assets that could pay off alleged victims, Dicke said that has yet to be determined.

In November, the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission obtained a permanent injunction in Illinois against Lowrance and First Capital that ordered them to pay a $3.3 million civil penalty and $1.2 million in restitution.

Lowrance, who has also lived in California, Houston and Panama and previously ran a company called Mentor Investing Group Inc., has been on the Internal Revenue Service's radar at least as far back as 2007, according to an affidavit in the Illinois case.

Two undercover IRS agents met with Lowrance in Panama in 2008, and Lowrance said his company had 419 clients and was managing about $37 million. He told them that First Capital paid interest rates of 3 percent to 5 percent per month through the foreign exchange trading program, according to the affidavit.

Alleged victims include an Illinois architect, a Memphis commercial real estate broker, a 78-year-old retired Illinois school teacher and a 77-year-old California woman who sold books and flags on eBay. Each made investments of between $10,000 and $100,000.

The South Dakota civil complaint said clients drained retirement and college accounts, mortgaged homes and sold businesses in hopes of earning 7 percent monthly returns. Clients were given online access to their accounts and cash was deposited and withdrawn through wire transfers. Clients were happy as long as the monthly returns kept coming.

But when the dividends stopped coming in mid-2008 and investors started to grow weary, a writer hired for USA Tomorrow began writing online accusing Lowrance of being a con artist and the complaints began to snowball.



## Neb. Changing Health Care Providers

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The state of Nebraska is switching health care providers in a move that will save an estimated $8 million a year without major disruptions for employees, a state administrator said Wednesday.

Department of Administrative Services Director Carlos Castillo said the change to United Health Care was based on the expected yearly savings for the state and its employees. Nebraska has been a Blue Cross/Blue Shield client for at least 25 years.

Castillo said United Health Care has established a large network in Nebraska, similar to Blue Cross/Blue Shield, so the vast majority of employees will see no disruption in their services. Some employees may have to go to a different provider, but Castillo said the networks are "pretty much the same."

"It just made financial sense for us," Castillo said. "They've done a lot to grow their network in Nebraska over the years, and so their network is comparable to Blue Cross/Blue Shield."

Nebraska self-insures, but uses the insurance company to administer its plans. The state of Nebraska and its employees spend about $184 million annually on coverage. The state pays 79 percent of premiums, and employees cover 21 percent.

The plans cover approximately 30,000 state employees and dependents. The new agreement will take effect July 1, once the contract is finalized.

The plan is also expected to let employees fill their prescriptions at Walgreens, which had been removed from the existing state plan because of a contract dispute with Express Scripts, a national pharmacy benefit manager. More than half of the enrolled state employees with prescriptions were filling them at drugstore chain.