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# **A.G. Schneiderman Announces Indictment Of Former Nyc Parks Employee For Bid-Rigging And Accepting Bribes**

Joint Investigation With DOI Reveals Parks Employee Pocketed More Than \$20,000 In Kickbacks

Schneiderman: Corrupt Government Employees Who Betray The Public's Trust Will Be Vigorously Prosecuted By This Office

BRONX - Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman and New York City Department of Investigation Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn today announced the indictment of Joseph Sdao, a former Project Manager for the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, for pocketing more than \$20,000 in bribes to rig Bronx playground contracts. Sdao, a Westbury resident, is charged with five felonies, including two counts of Bribe Receiving in the Second Degree, one count of Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, and two counts of Combination in Restraint of Trade and Competition, a violation of the Donnelly Act. He was arraigned this morning in Bronx Criminal Court before the Honorable Justice Denis J. Boyle.

"Corrupt public servants who violate their official duties destroy the public's confidence in the governmental process and will be vigorously prosecuted by this office. Betraying the public's trust and stealing money from the taxpayers will not be tolerated," said **Attorney General Schneiderman**. "Today's charges demonstrate our commitment to working with our investigative partners to root out corruption within government agencies."

According to the indictment, from August 2005 to June 2008, Joseph Sdao engaged in a scheme to accept bribes from a construction vendor. More specifically, the indictment charges that in his official capacity as a Project Manager for the Parks Department, Sdao agreed to provide a particular vendor with copies of the engineer's estimate for two projects, prior to the date sealed and competitive bids were due. The engineer's estimate is an internal Parks Department document not intended for distribution to bidders before they submit their bids. In exchange, Sdao agreed to accept a percentage of the contract price if that vendor won the contracts.

The indictment further charges that Sdao made a secret deal with employees of the vendor to process the vendor's requests for payments for certain additional work known as "overruns." In exchange, Sdao received bribe payments that represented a percentage of the difference between the engineer's estimated price the city should pay, and an inflated price for the overrun materials. The scheme resulted in Sdao accepting bribes totaling more than \$20,000.

**DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn**said, "This defendant betrayed City taxpayers by garnering thousands of dollars in bribes in exchange for confidential contract information, according to the indictment. A City employee who abuses his or her insider access for personal gain will face arrest, criminal prosecution, and loss of employment. Through the work of DOI and the state Attorney General this defendant's ruse was exposed, and he has been arrested and charged, and no longer works for the City."

The investigation arose out of an investigation by the Labor Bureau of the Attorney General's Office. If convicted of the top charge, Sdao could be incarcerated for a maximum period of five to 15 years in state prison.

The charges against Sdao are allegations. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

The Attorney General thanked the New York City Department of Investigation for its assistance in this investigation, particularly Assistant Inspector General William Holland and Deputy Inspector General Michael Healy.

Prosecuting the case are Assistant Attorneys General YuJin Hong and Ann Marie Preissler, under the supervision of Public Integrity Deputy Bureau Chief Stacy Aronowitz, Chief William E. Schaeffer, and Executive Deputy Attorney General for Criminal Justice Nancy Hoppock.

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