



Department of Investigation

Press Release

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TOW INDUSTRY REP ARRESTED FOR PAYING UNLAWFUL GRATUITY -- Gave DCA Clerk \$100 Macy's Gift Certificate As "Late Xmas" Present In June! --

EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the arrest of NORMAN SIEGEL, a representative of the Metropolitan NY Towing & Auto Body Association, a Brooklyn-based towing industry trade group, for unlawfully giving a \$100 Macy's gift certificate to a Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) adjudication unit clerk last summer.

Commissioner Kuriansky said, "Whether given in June or December, whether for Christmas or otherwise, gifts to public servants are illegal. This arrest is part of DOI's ongoing effort to deter municipal corruption and should serve as a fair warning to any citizen who might even be tempted to pay off a City worker. In this case, the DCA employee to whom the illegal gratuity was given immediately reported it to DOI. Her actions are to be commended. She represents the overwhelming majority of good, honest, and decent City employees."

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, DCA enforces the City's Consumer Protection Law, administers City and State weights and measures statutes, and licenses various types of businesses and activities, including tow trucks and drivers, as part of its responsibility to protect consumers. DCA's adjudication unit holds administrative hearings and appeals of summonses issued by DCA inspectors for various license and permit infractions.

Commissioner Kuriansky said an investigation began in June, when a DCA clerk notified DOI that she had allegedly been given an improper gift inside the agency's lower Manhattan offices.

The investigation disclosed that SIEGEL, on June 16, 2000, had approached the DCA clerk at a 9th floor elevator in the agency's 42 Broadway offices and handed her an envelope, which the clerk believed contained photos relating to a pending towing case. The clerk, when she exited the elevator on the 5th floor, opened the envelope and saw that it contained a Macy's \$100 gift certificate. The clerk immediately informed her supervisor, and then notified DOI.

Thereafter, on June 19, 2000, at the request of DOI, the DCA clerk phoned SIEGEL at his Brooklyn office. She asked him the purpose of his gift, and he allegedly responded, "a late Christmas."

SIEGEL, 47, of 2159 Bay Ridge Parkway in Brooklyn, was charged with Giving Unlawful Gratuities, a Class A misdemeanor punishable by up to 1 year in jail.

Tow Industry Rep Arrested For Paying Unlawful Gratuity

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to Commissioner Jane Hoffman and members of her staff for their cooperation and assistance in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by John McMahon, DOI's Acting Inspector General for DCA, and members of his staff, including Confidential Investigator Jayme Naberezny, Senior Investigative Attorney Robert Eisman, and Special Investigator Annette Palmer.

The Office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Berger of the DA's Special Prosecutions Bureau is handling the matter.