



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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DOI ARRESTS MAN FOR POSING AS CITY OFFICIALS AND EXTORTING MONEY FROM HOMEOWNER

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation, announced today the arrest of DARIN B. POOLE for impersonating City officials, including a New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) police captain, and fraudulently soliciting and accepting \$675 in extortion payments from a Bronx homeowner who thought he was paying fines to dismiss pending violations against the homeowner's property at the City's Environmental Control Board (ECB).

POOLE, 43, of Roosevelt, New York, will be charged with Criminal Impersonation Second Degree and Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree. If convicted, he faces up to four years imprisonment.

DOI's investigation began when the Bronx homeowner contacted the DEP Police Division to report the solicitations. The DEP Police subsequently reported the allegations to DOI. Using the name of a fictitious DEP police captain as well as other City officials, POOLE allegedly solicited payments from the Bronx homeowner over the telephone. The homeowner's property had legitimate pending ECB violations that had been issued against the building's prior owner by various City agencies, including the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (relating to the illegal conversion of the property from a multi-family residence into Single Room Occupancy) and the Department of Sanitation (relating to dirty sidewalks and improper curbside recycling). All contact between the homeowner and POOLE occurred over the telephone. During these calls, the homeowner was instructed to make wire transfers via Western Union to a fictitious official in 'Code Enforcement.' The homeowner was allegedly told by POOLE that he would be arrested, evicted from his home, and the property padlocked if the payments were not made. During phone calls between the homeowner and POOLE, the victim was allegedly instructed to make over \$2,000 in payments to POOLE. The victim made four wire transfer payments totaling \$675 to POOLE at several Western Union locations in Brooklyn and Nassau County.

The pending violations against the homeowner's property were not dismissed by ECB and the homeowner is still responsible for correcting these violations and satisfying any outstanding ECB judgments against the property.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "This defendant tried to scare and defraud an unsuspecting citizen in order to line his own pockets. Now, that game is over. Fines and taxes owed the City are always made payable to the City of New York and never to an individual. City employees do not and should not demand that money is wired to them personally. New Yorkers who suspect they may have been approached by scam artists posing as City employees demanding money should call DOI at (212) 825-5959."

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for DEP John Kantor and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Michael Carroll and Assistant Inspector General Michael Healy. Detective Andrew Rice of the DEP Police Division Detectives Bureau assisted in the investigation. The Office of Bronx District Attorney Robert Johnson is prosecuting. Assistant District Attorney Colleen Barry will handle the matter.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Get the worms out of the Big Apple.
To report someone ripping off the city, call DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.