



# Department of Investigation

## *Press Release*

Release 067-99

### **7 DEP EMPLOYEES CHARGED WITH FILING FALSE APPLICATIONS FOR STATE CERTIFICATION AS TREATMENT PLANT OPERATORS**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1999 -- EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation, today announced the felony arrest of 6 New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) employees for falsely claiming on applications, filed with the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), that they had the necessary training to qualify as operators of wastewater treatment plants. A 7<sup>th</sup> defendant, a DEP supervisor, was charged with knowingly countersigning 2 of the fraudulent applications.

The 7 DEP employees -- MICHAEL KRASNOPOLSKI, EDWARD CALDERON, ROBERT MOYLAN, MICHAEL KALBERER, ANTHONY FIRRIOLO, PRASANTA K. MAITRA, and JEFFREY WEIL -- were variously charged with the crimes of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree and Making a Punishable False Written Statement. If convicted, they each face up to 4 years in prison.

Commissioner Kuriansky explained that to qualify as a Grade 1 operator of a wastewater treatment plant, State regulations require an applicant to have at least 6 months of relevant experience. In order to enable its workers to gain the necessary experience, DEP, in 1994, implemented a plan to rotate sewage treatment workers from sewage collection facilities to the City's 14 wastewater treatment plants.

In late 1998, according to Commissioner Kuriansky, DEP compiled a list of 18 of its sewage treatment workers who had been working for nearly three years but had never received the contemplated wastewater treatment experience. In reviewing the list, staff of the development and training section of DEP's Bureau of Wastewater Pollution Control noted that KRASNOPOLSKI and MOYLAN, two of the listed workers, had already been certified by State DEC as wastewater treatment plant operators even though they did not possess the required experience when their certification applications were filed. Further inquiry revealed that, of the other 16 workers on the list, three -- CALDERON, KALBERER and FIRRIOLO -- had previously submitted applications for certification, even though they also lacked the requisite experience at the time of the filing.

The investigation also revealed that two of the false applications had been countersigned by DEP supervisor JEFFREY WEIL, who allegedly knew that the workers, FIRRIOLO and KALBERER, lacked the required experience to be properly certified as operators of wastewater treatment plants. Finally, DEP learned that PRASANTA K. MAITRA, a stationary engineer (electric), had also received State certification without first having obtained the required experience.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his appreciation to DEP Commissioner Joel A. Miele, Jr., P.E., and his staff, especially William R. Haberland, Chief of the Division of Environmental Health, Safety and Training, and Walter A. Dobkowski, Chief of the Development and Training section in the Bureau of Wastewater Pollution Control, for initially bringing this matter to light, and for their assistance during the course of the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by Clive I. Morruck, DOI's Inspector General for DEP, and members of his staff, including Confidential Investigator John Alleva.

The Office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Polly Samuels is handling the matter under the supervision of Eugene Porcaro, Chief of the District Attorney's Trial Bureau 30.

## **DEFENDANT INFORMATION**

1. MICHAEL KRASNOPOLSKI, 29, of Queens, has been employed by DEP as a sewage treatment worker since 1996, and earns \$41,321 annually. He was charged with 1 count of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree and 1 count of Making a Punishable False Written Statement.
2. EDWARD CALDERON, 31, of Queens, has been employed by DEP as a sewage treatment worker since 1996, and earns \$41,321 annually. He was charged with 1 count of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree and 1 count of Making a Punishable False Written Statement.
3. ROBERT MOYLAN, 36, of Queens, has been employed by DEP as a sewage treatment worker since 1996, and earns \$41,321 annually. He was charged with 1 count of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree and 1 count of Making a Punishable False Written Statement.
4. MICHAEL KALBERER, 34, of Maspeth, Queens, has been employed by DEP as a sewage treatment worker since 1996, and earns \$41,321 annually. He was charged with 1 count of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree and 1 count of Making a Punishable False Written Statement.
5. ANTHONY FIRRIOLO, 30, of Queens, has been employed by DEP as a sewage treatment worker since 1997, and earns \$41,321 annually. He was charged with 1 count of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree and 1 count of Making a Punishable False Written Statement.
6. JEFFREY WEIL, 44, of Queens, has been employed by DEP as a supervisor (deputy chief, collection facilities, Tallman Island) since July 1985 and earns \$59,988 annually. He was charged with 1 count of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree.
7. PRASANTA K. MAITRA, 56, of Queens, has been employed by DEP as a Stationary Engineer (Electric) since May 1996, and earns \$57,503 annually. He was charged with 3 counts of Offering a False Instrument For Filing in the First Degree and 3 counts of Making a Punishable False Written Statement.