



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI ARRESTS PLUMBING COMPANY OWNER WHO PLEADS GUILTY TO
FALSIFYING A CITY PERMIT APPLICATION IN THE NAME OF A DECEASED PLUMBER**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrest and guilty plea of the owner of a Brooklyn-based plumbing and heating company to using the name and forged signature of a deceased licensed plumber to obtain a permit from the City Department of Buildings ("DOB") for work in Brooklyn in 2007. DOI's investigation began after the agency received an allegation that the defendant had filed jobs under the license of a deceased employee. The office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the case.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Using the license of a deceased tradesman to obtain a City work permit is an exceptionally foolhardy crime that is bound to be discovered and prosecuted. DOI and DOB, with the City's prosecutors and other City agencies, have taken a strong stand against false and fraudulent statements designed to deceive City examiners and inspectors. If left unchecked, these deceptive practices erode the integrity of the City's records and its ability to ensure that the work meets the applicable standards."

PETER CATENA, 42, of Brooklyn, was arrested Tuesday, April 27, 2010, and charged with Forgery in the Second Degree and Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, class D felonies; Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor. He pleaded guilty late Tuesday in Kings County Criminal Court to Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor. As part of a plea agreement, the defendant's sentencing was adjourned for six months. He was ordered to perform 300 hours of community service and paid a settlement of \$200,000.

According to the criminal complaint, in May 2007, an application seeking permits for a plumbing project at Carlton Avenue in Brooklyn was submitted to DOB on behalf of Avanti Plumbing and Heating, Inc, which is wholly owned by the defendant. The application included the name and purported signature of a licensed plumber who ostensibly would be responsible for overseeing the project, and, based on the application, DOB granted Avanti the necessary permits. DOI's investigation found that, contrary to Avanti's application, the licensed plumber supposedly overseeing the work had died eight months earlier, on September 7, 2006.

DOB inspected jobs filed under the name of the deceased licensed plumber subsequent to his death, and no problems were uncovered.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes and DOB Commissioner Robert D. LiMandri and their staffs for their assistance on this investigation.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of Inspector General for DOB.

Assistant District Attorney Michael Morelli of the Kings County District Attorney's Office is assigned to the prosecution.

A criminal complaint is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. Investigations may involve any agency, officer, elected official or employee of the City, as well as those who do business with or receive benefits from the City.

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