



The City of New York
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**DOI ARRESTS FOUR INDIVIDUALS ON BRIBERY CHARGES
BASED ON TIPS FROM CITY BUILDINGS INSPECTORS**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), announced the arrests of two homeowners, a building owner, and a home improvement contractor in three separate cases on charges of paying cash bribes – between \$100 and \$1,000 – to avoid construction violations issued by the City Department of Buildings ("DOB"). DOI began each of the investigations after it was notified by DOB Inspectors that they were offered cash bribes. The arrests occurred within the last six weeks, with the most recent arrests today. The offices of Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes are prosecuting the cases.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "The City has zero tolerance for individuals who try to corrupt City employees to dodge construction violations. Everyone should know City Buildings Inspectors report bribe offers to DOI and that the price of that crime is arrest and prosecution. I commend the Building Inspectors who stepped up to report illegal conduct and for their assistance in DOI's ongoing effort to expose and halt corrupt practices."

The following are synopses of the incidents:

- Today, DOI arrested VIVEKANAND DHANPATLALL, 53, a Queens contractor, and RAJKARAN VISHUDANAND, 62, father of the property owner, both of Richmond Hill, Queens, who have been charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony, punishable upon conviction by up to seven years in prison. The office of Queens County District Attorney Richard A. Brown is prosecuting the case.

According to the criminal complaint, on October 20, 2010, a DOB Inspector observed construction taking place at a Queens residence on 109th Avenue without the proper permits and told the defendants that they would need to obtain the proper permits or cease construction. In response, the defendants gave the inspector \$1,000 in cash to be allowed to continue the work and to receive no violations.

- On October 14, 2010, DOI arrested LEON NEKTALOV, 50, of Flushing, Queens, charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony. Assistant District Attorney Corey Shook of the Kings County District Attorney's Office is assigned to the prosecution of the case.

According to the criminal complaint, in August 2010, ongoing construction work was observed at a residential building on Brighton 5th Street in Brooklyn despite an active stop work order. On September 1, 2010, a DOI undercover investigator posing as a DOB inspector told the defendant that he would be issued a violation for ignoring a stop work order and for the presence of unsafe scaffolding. The defendant threw \$160 on the ground and handed an additional \$40 to the "inspector" stating that he wanted to avoid a summons.

- On October 5, 2010, DOI arrested JOYCE LALL, 63, of Jamaica, Queens, charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, a class D felony. Assistant District Attorney Michelle Cort of the Queens County District Attorney's Office is assigned to prosecution of the case.

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According to the criminal complaint, in August 2010, the defendant offered \$100 to a DOI undercover investigator posing as a DOB inspector to avoid a violation against her residential property on 130th Street in Queens.

DOB has re-inspected each of the three residential properties.

Commissioner Gill Hearn thanks DOB Commissioner Robert LiMandri, Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown, and Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes, and their staffs, for their assistance on these investigations.

These investigations were conducted by DOI's Inspector General for the Department of Buildings.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are 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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