



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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Release #42-2014
nyc.gov/html/doi

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2015**

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**STATEN ISLAND CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OWNER ARRESTED ON CHARGE OF
RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT AT A PUBLIC HOUSING DEVELOPMENT**

Mark G. Peters, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation ("DOI"), in partnership with Richmond County Acting District Attorney Daniel L. Master, Jr., announced the arrest of the owner of a Staten Island construction company on a charge of reckless endangerment for operating heavy machinery, a Bobcat, on the roof of a building at the New York City Housing Authority's ("NYCHA") South Beach Houses. The investigation found the defendant did not obtain a cranes and derrick permit from the City Department of Buildings ("DOB") for lifting the machinery onto the roof and he did not obtain an engineer's assessment to see if the roof could sustain the weight of the 1 ton Bobcat. DOI investigators were alerted to the unsafe activity while conducting an unrelated investigation at another NYCHA development in Staten Island.

Commissioner Mark G. Peters said, "The owner of this company decided to operate above the law and put the lives of NYCHA residents and his own coworkers at risk, according to the criminal complaint. This arrest further highlights the potential dangers of cutting corners and defying City safety procedures on construction sites. As part of DOI's ongoing investigation into construction safety, we will continue to arrest those who flout the rules. I thank the Staten Island District Attorney's Office for being a steadfast partner with us in our construction fraud investigations."

Richmond County Acting District Attorney Daniel L. Master, Jr. said, "The defendant created a substantial risk of serious physical injury to his coworkers and the residents of this NYCHA building when he recklessly operated a Bobcat vehicle on the roof during a construction project. I want to thank DOI Commissioner Mark Peters and his staff for their assistance with this case."

TOMMY DEMONERIS, 55, of Brooklyn, N.Y., owner of Telentos Construction, at 56 Sands Street, Staten Island, N.Y., was arrested late yesterday and charged with one count of Reckless Endangerment in the Second Degree, a class A misdemeanor. Upon conviction, a class A misdemeanor is punishable by up to one year in jail.

According to the criminal complaint and DOI's investigation, DEMONERIS was seen operating a Bobcat 453 Skid Steer Loader on the roof of the apartment building in an effort to scrape off roofing material, while workers were present on the roof. A further investigation determined DEMONERIS had failed to obtain a permit from DOB to lift the Bobcat onto the rooftop of the six-floor building. In addition, investigators also found no permanent guardrail on the roof to protect workers and prevent falling debris. Instead, only a temporary steel cable was in place around the edges of the building, creating a potential safety hazard. According to the investigation, the defendant had brought the bobcat on the roof to move material faster to meet a deadline.

A photo of the defendant operating the Bobcat on the edge of the roof is attached to this release.

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Commissioner Peters thanked Richmond County Acting District Attorney Daniel L. Master, Jr. and his staff for their assistance in this investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for the New York City Housing Authority, specifically by Investigator Ryan Covino, under the supervision of Inspector General Ralph Iannuzzi.

Bureau Chief of the Richmond County District Attorney's Office Criminal Court Bureau Jeffrey Curiale is prosecuting the case.

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 and New York City's corruption watchdog. 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. DOI's strategy attacks corruption comprehensively through systemic investigations that lead to high-impact arrests, preventive internal controls and operational reforms that improve the way the City runs.

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