



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

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**DOI ARRESTS EXPEDITOR ON CHARGES OF SUBMITTING FORGED DOCUMENTS
TO THE CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP)**
--DEP alerted DOI to purported fraudulent DEP water meter installation permits--

Margaret Garnett, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (“DOI”), announced the arrest today of an expeditor who allegedly submitted forged documents to the City Department of Environmental Protection (“DEP”) Bronx office at 1932 Arthur Avenue. DEP reported the forged documents to DOI. The office of Queens County District Attorney Melinda Katz is prosecuting this case.

SEAN KELLY, 40, of Middle Village, Queens, N.Y., was arrested on charges today including four counts each of Attempted Forgery in the Second Degree and Attempted Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, both class E felonies, associated with acts that occurred between February and June 2019. Upon conviction, a class E felony is punishable by up to four years in prison. KELLY is scheduled to appear in Queens County Criminal Court on December 16, 2020.

DOI Commissioner Margaret Garnett said, “An expeditor’s role is to get the job done correctly and effectively, ensuring all regulations are met; cutting corners is not a part of the job description. In New York construction, there is no room for circumventing the rules or for fraud, which can undermine the safety and integrity of a project. I thank DEP for reporting this matter to DOI and the Queens District Attorney’s Office for their partnership.”

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz said, “Rules and regulations are in place for a reason – to protect the public. The defendant in this case is accused of circumventing procedures to ensure safe installation of water meters at a school. Underhanded maneuvers like this put people at risk. I want to thank Commissioner Garnett and her investigators for uncovering this alleged scheme.”

According to DOI’s investigation, DEP’s Bronx Borough Permit Supervisor reported to DOI that in July 2019 she received two purported fraudulent DEP water meter installation permits that each had an issuance date of June 27, 2019. A DEP computer check revealed that neither permit number existed. In addition, DEP had no record of the receipt of the required filing fee of \$35 for each permit. The permits were related to 411 Wales Ave. in the Bronx, where a commercial warehouse was being converted into a charter school. The permits had a valid signature of a master plumber who indicated the defendant had been hired to obtain necessary DEP permits and he was unaware the documents were fraudulent. The defendant confirmed he provided the documents to the master plumber and that he knew both permits were not valid. The defendant indicated he was under pressure to obtain the DEP permits for the client and that instead of standing in line and submitting the forms, he generated both of the purported DEP

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water meter installation permits on his personal computer at his Queens residence. The defendant indicated that neither his employer nor the master plumber knew about the fraudulent documents. The defendant also indicated he had submitted a couple other fraudulent permits. DEP located two additional fraudulent permits submitted to the Queens DEP Permit Office in February 2019 in connection with a water meter installation at 21-22 Steinway St. in Queens.

DEP inspected the plumbing work at the Bronx and Queens locations and both properties passed those inspections.

Commissioner Garnett thanked DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza, and his staff, for their cooperation in this investigation; and Queens County District Attorney Melinda Katz and her staff for their prosecution of this matter, specifically Assistant District Attorney Daniel O'Leary, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney James M. Liander, Bureau Chief of the Public Corruption Bureau.

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Office of the Inspector General for DEP, specifically Special Investigator Omar Sarach, with assistance from Chief Investigator Barry Romm, under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General Michael Antolini, First Deputy Inspector General Daniel Boylan, Inspector General Andrew Brunsten, Deputy Commissioner/Chief of Investigations Dominick Zarrella, and First Deputy Commissioner Daniel Cort.

Arrest charges are 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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