



Department of Investigation

Press Releases

Queens ECB Aide Arrested In DOI Bribery "Sting"

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2000 -- EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of JENNIFER DESENA, a New York City Environmental Control Board (ECB) administrative aide, for taking payoffs, totaling \$500, from a DOI undercover agent posing as a plumber seeking to dismiss a Notice of Violation (NOV) for a building code infraction.

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, the ECB is the administrative tribunal that holds hearings on NOV's issued by City enforcement agencies for various quality-of-life violations. The agencies served by the ECB include the Departments of Buildings, Transportation, Fire, and Environmental Protection.

DOI began an investigation in January in response to a telephone call from a coworker of DESENA at the Queens ECB office in Jamaica. The coworker had reported that a property owner called to complain that DESENA had not sent the building permit she promised to get for him, although he had paid her \$100. The property owner had been served with an NOV for installing a basement bathroom without a building permit; however, the ECB does not even issue building permits.

Several weeks later, an undercover DOI investigator, posing as the property owner's plumber, was introduced to DESENA when she met with the property owner to discuss the problem. Thereafter, the undercover phoned DESENA to say that another client had been issued an NOV for relocating a kitchen sink at a different property without a permit. DESENA allegedly agreed to dismiss the new NOV for \$400, and she received the cash payoff the next day in a restaurant near the ECB office.

A few weeks later, DESENA allegedly demanded an additional \$100 when the undercover telephoned her to request proof that the NOV had in fact been dismissed. The next day, DESENA met the undercover and accepted \$100 in cash.

DESENA, 20, of 100-12 103rd Avenue in Ozone Park, Queens, has been employed by DEP as a City Seasonal Aide since 1997, earning \$8.01 per hour. She is charged with two counts of Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree. If convicted, she faces up to 7 years in prison.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to DEP Commissioner Joel A. Miele and his staff for their cooperation and assistance during the course of the investigation.

The investigation, which is continuing, is being conducted by Clive Morricks, DOI's Inspector General for DEP, and members of his staff, including Deputy Inspector General Dean Tow, Jr., Examining Attorney

Karen Erivona, and Special Investigator Marc Herman.

The Office of Queens County District Attorney Richard Brown is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Robert Ciesla is handling the matter.

Members of the public are reminded that a complaint is merely an accusation and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial in which it is the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.