



Department of Investigation *Press Release*

Release #046-2000

Fire Safety Director Arrested In DOI "Sting" *-Sold Forged FDNY Air Compressors Fitness Certificate To Undercover For \$300-*

TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 2000 -- EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of LAWRENCE MCDOUGAL, a fire safety director formerly employed by KBI Security Service, Inc., and assigned to the Brooklyn Office of the Health Insurance Plan of New York (HIP), for selling a forged Fire Department certificate of fitness to operate an air compressor to a DOI undercover agent posing as an auto mechanic.

According to Commissioner Kuriansky, Fire Department regulations require auto mechanics who operate air compressors in auto body and repair shops to pass a 2-hour qualifying examination given by the FDNY Public Certification Unit (PCU) at fire headquarters in downtown Brooklyn, and, thereafter, to renew their certification every 3 years. The PCU annually issues about 1,800 air compressor fitness certificates.

Commissioner Kuriansky said that the investigation began in April, when a DOI undercover agent, acting on a tip that MCDOUGAL had been selling phony FDNY fitness certificates, posed as a mechanic at a Brooklyn auto body shop where MCDOUGAL recently had his car repaired, and telephoned MCDOUGAL to ask if he could help him get a certificate of fitness to operate an air compressor. MCDOUGAL, who falsely identified himself to the undercover as a firefighter, said that, for \$300, he would take the Fire Department's air compressor test, obtain a fitness certificate in his own name, and then give it to the undercover. MCDOUGAL also instructed the undercover that he should tell fire inspectors, who might later come to the auto body shop to check the bogus certificate, that he was MCDOUGAL.

Thereafter, on May 9, the undercover, wearing a concealed recording device, met MCDOUGAL in a HIP office lobby at 153 Pierrepont St. in Brooklyn Heights and gave him \$300 in cash, the amount MCDOUGAL had demanded in return for obtaining a certificate. In a second meeting, 3 days later, MCDOUGAL taped a passport-size color photo of the undercover (which he had told the undercover to bring) over the identification photo of MCDOUGAL on the FDNY certificate he had obtained the day before when he took and passed the air compressor fitness test.

MCDOUGAL, 44, of Jamaica, Queens, was charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, and Tampering With Public Records in the First Degree, all Class D felonies; Falsifying Business Records in the First Degree, a Class E felony; and, Criminal Impersonation in the Second Degree, a Class A misdemeanor. If convicted, he faces up to 7 years in prison.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to Fire Commissioner Thomas Von Essen and members of his staff for their assistance and cooperation in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by Elyse N. Post, DOI's Acting Inspector General for the Fire Department, and members of her staff, including Chief Investigator Francis X. Smith, and Confidential Investigators Timothy Crowe, Steven Montague, and Jayme Naberezny.

The Office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Patrick F. Cappock is handling the matter.