



## Department of Investigation *Press Release*

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### **NYC FIREFIGHTER ARRESTED IN \$5K WORKERS' COMPENSATION SCAM** *– Illegally Received Benefits While Actively Employed–*

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), and ROBERT T. JOHNSON, Bronx District Attorney, today announced the arrest and indictment of CURTIS A. CROWE, a New York City firefighter, for stealing \$4,666 by fraudulently receiving workers' compensation benefits from the State of Nebraska, while simultaneously employed as a firefighter.

"The double-dipping engaged in by this defendant is all the more disturbing because of his employment in one of the City government's most venerated public service jobs," Commissioner Gill Hearn said. "The protection of the public goes beyond safety issues. It also includes maintaining the public trust, which he, unfortunately, violated."

District Attorney Johnson said, "This appears to be a case of particularly unconscionable greed. That's the only possible explanation for these facts."

Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta added, "I'm grateful that DOI and the Bronx District Attorney's Office have moved expeditiously and effectively in this case."

CROWE has been charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree and Insurance Fraud in the Third Degree, both Class D felonies.

DOI began an investigation in May 2001 when the New York State Insurance Department's Frauds Bureau reported that CROWE was receiving workers' compensation benefits from the State of Nebraska while he was simultaneously employed as a New York City firefighter.

The investigation disclosed that CROWE, who was appointed as a firefighter on February 1, 2000, assigned to the Fire Academy on Randall's Island, applied for and received workers' compensation benefits in January 2000 following leg and hip injuries he received in a December 1999 fall while performing as a ballet dancer on tour in Omaha, Nebraska. Between February 2000 and April 2000, CROWE received 10 checks, totaling \$4,666 from the Hartford Insurance Company.

Commissioner Gill Hearn noted that CROWE, in the medical history questionnaire he completed and signed

## NYC Firefighter Arrested In \$5K Workers' Compensation Scam

prior to joining the Fire Department, stated that he had no injury which would prevent him from performing the duties of a firefighter.

CROWE, 39, of 134 Thompson Street in Manhattan, has been on administrative leave since June 2002, and earns an annual salary of \$36,077. He has been suspended without pay, and faces up to 7 years in prison, if convicted.

Commissioner Gill Hearn expressed her sincere appreciation to Fire Commissioner Nicholas Scoppetta, the New York State Insurance Department, and to the Hartford Insurance Company for their cooperation and assistance in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by John McMahon, Inspector General for the Fire Department and members of his staff.

Senior Trial Assistant District Attorney Larry Hartstein, under the supervision of Bureau Chief Tom Leahy of the Rackets Bureau, is prosecuting the case.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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