



The City of New York
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN
COMMISSIONER

80 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038
212-825-5900

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CONTACT: EMILY GEST
(212) 825-5931

DOI ARRESTS WOMAN FOR FALSIFYING DOCUMENTS TO OBTAIN BUILDING PERMITS

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation, announced today the arrest of JOYCE POTTS for falsifying documents with the Department of Buildings (DOB) so that contractors and property owners could obtain buildings permits.

POTTS, 52, of Brooklyn, has been charged with four counts each of Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree. If convicted, she faces up to seven years in jail.

DOI's investigation of POTTS began after receiving a complaint that POTTS had used the DOB-assigned tracking number of an insured contractor without his permission in order to obtain construction work permits from DOB. According to DOB regulations, construction work permits are only issued if the applicant has the requisite liability insurance. POTTS allegedly entered the unsuspecting contractor's insurance information, tracking number on work permit applications and cost affidavits for small renovation jobs. DOI has shared with DOB the addresses for the renovations so that DOB may inspect the jobs as a safety precaution.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "This defendant's scheme to help contractors without insurance could have had disastrous consequences. This case underscores the need for those doing business within the City to do so with integrity – especially when the public's safety is involved."

Buildings Commissioner Patricia J. Lancaster, FAIA said, "This City will not tolerate anyone who deliberately subverts the integrity of the permit process. My thanks to the investigators who brought this case to successful conclusion."

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Chief of Staff and Inspector General for DOB, Robert Roach and members of his staff including Deputy Inspector General Joseph Ferraro, and Investigators Diane Delaney and John Delvalle. The Office of Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is handling the matter.

Criminal complaints are merely an accusation. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

DOI is one of the oldest law-enforcement agencies in the country. The agency investigates and refers for prosecution City employees and contractors engaged in corrupt or fraudulent activities or unethical conduct. 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.

Get the worms out of the Big Apple.
To report someone ripping off the city, call 311 or DOI directly at (212) 825-5959.