



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN  
COMMISSIONER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DOI ARRESTS CITY HIGHWAY AND SEWER INSPECTOR FOR ACCEPTING BRIBES**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), announced today the arrest of New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) Highway and Sewer Inspector LOUIS EPSTEIN for receiving \$200 in bribes and unlawful gratuities from a private plumbing contractor.

EPSTEIN, 47, of Brooklyn, will be charged with Bribery in the Third Degree, Receiving Reward for Official Misconduct in the Second Degree, Receiving Unlawful Gratuities and Official Misconduct, and a violation, Unlawful Possession of Marijuana. If convicted, he faces up to seven years in jail. EPSTEIN has been a Highway and Sewer Inspector with DOT's Highway Inspection and Quality Assurance (HIQA) unit since 1990. He is assigned to DOT's HIQA office in Staten Island. EPSTEIN has worked for DOT since 1983.

During a DOI investigation that resulted in the 2003 indictment of 14 plumbing contractors for bribing a New York City Department of Buildings' inspector, DOI uncovered additional evidence that led to today's arrest. On three separate occasions EPSTEIN received a total of \$200 from the owner and a foreman of a Staten Island plumbing firm. The monies were given to EPSTEIN so he would overlook the contractor's poor repairs in filling a hole in the street that had been dug up for plumbing work. In addition, EPSTEIN was to "look out" for the company so that it would not be issued any summonses for violations of the City's Environmental Control Board.

At DOI's request, DOT has re-inspected the work done at this job site is re-inspected. No significant safety issues were found.

DOI Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn said, "Instead of making sure that City streets are safer, this defendant's greedy and irresponsible conduct has created a roadmap for himself that could lead to the City's jails. Contractors and City employees should know that DOI is watching and will make sure all successful or unsuccessful attempts to bribe City workers will be investigated and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

This investigation was conducted by DOI's Inspector General for DOT, Mary T. Piechocki and members of her staff, including First Deputy Inspector General John M. Bellanie, Counsel to the Inspector General Gia Morris, Chief Investigator Edward Zinser and Special Investigator Omar Sarach. Assistant District Attorney Rick Pasacreta of the Office of the District Attorney for Richmond County is handling the prosecution.

Criminal complaints are accusations. 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 DOI at (212) 825-5959.***