



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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VESTAL HOME HEATING MECHANIC CHARGED WITH WORKERS' COMPENSATION FRAUD

BINGHAMTON – New York State Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest of Vestal heating system mechanic on charges he defrauded the Workers' Compensation system and stole benefits to which he was not entitled by claiming he was not working due to an injury when he was actually working.

Kurt Motsko, 49, of Vestal, was arrested and charged with Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, Insurance Fraud in the Third Degree and the Workers' Compensation crime of Fraudulent Practices, all felonies.

An investigation by Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General Leahy Scott found that Motsko reported a work-related injury in November 2015 while working as a mechanic for a local heating company. Shortly thereafter, he stopped working and began collecting Workers' Compensation wage replacement benefits. While on disability leave, Motsko repeatedly told his treating physician that he was not working in any capacity. The investigation determined, however, he was in fact working as a technician for another local home heating company and accepted a side job as an independent contractor installing a home heating system. During that side job, the investigation found, Motsko asked the homeowner to make checks out to his wife in order to conceal the income from the Workers' Compensation Board.

The charges allege that between May 2, 2016 and September 16, 2016, Motsko stole more than \$8,400 in benefits to which he was not entitled.

“This defendant's active concealment of income and brazen misrepresentations were a flagrant abuse of a benefits program meant to assist honest and hard-working New Yorkers,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “My office will continue to vigorously pursue anyone who abuses and defrauds the State's vital Workers' Compensation system.”

Motsko was arraigned on the charges Thursday evening by the Town of Vestal Court and remanded to the Broome County Jail pending further court action.

Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrest and Broome County District Attorney Stephen K. Cornwell, Jr., and his office for prosecuting this matter.

The charges are merely allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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The New York State Office of the Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General investigates fraud, abuse and/or illegal acts against the New York State Workers' Compensation system, including fraud by medical service providers, employers seeking to evade appropriate Workers' Compensation charges, and employees who fabricate injuries to fraudulently receive system benefits. Complaints and referrals are kept confidential. We can be reached by calling toll free: 1-800-367-4448, utilizing our online complaint form at <http://www.ig.ny.gov> or sending an email to: inspector.general@ig.ny.gov. You also can write to our office at: Office of the Workers' Compensation Fraud Inspector General, Empire State Plaza, Agency Building 2, 16th Floor, Albany, New York 12223