



NEWS

From the Office of the New York State Inspector General
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Contractor Accused of Invoice Padding

A private contractor who previously conducted business with the state Office of General Services (OGS) was arrested on felony charges Monday after a joint state investigation found that he allegedly falsified invoices for more than \$56,000 in improper payments.

David Darling, 61, who owns Pro Care Contracting, Inc. in Wyoming, N.Y., is accused of forging 22 lease agreements and five invoices to boost his bills on five emergency construction jobs at the Attica, Collins and Gowanda correctional facilities in western New York in 2006 and 2007.

Darling allegedly charged the state for Bobcat "rental equipment" which Pro Care actually owned and fudged costs or invoice dates for other equipment the company rented. In general, Pro Care was awarded contracts to do emergency construction work on 10 projects for up to \$1.5 million. OGS auditors discovered the questionable invoices in a routine audit late last year.

Following a referral from OGS Design and Construction's Contract Payment Audit Group, the investigation was conducted jointly by OGS, the Office of the State Comptroller and the New York State Inspector General's Office. New York State Police made the arrest Monday. Darling is being prosecuted by the Albany County District Attorney's office.

Darling was arraigned in Albany City Court Monday on charges of grand larceny, forgery, criminal possession of a forged instrument and offering a false instrument for filing. He was released on his own recognizance.

"There is no room in the OGS \$900 million portfolio of projects for contractors who pad billings or invoices," said OGS Commissioner John C.

Egan. "Each year OGS auditors scrutinize thousands of invoices with a careful eye on the billings for equipment and services delivered. When an incident of potential fraud or abuse is discovered, it is reported to the state Inspector General for review and appropriate action."

"This case is a perfect example of how interagency effort and cooperation serves the public interest," Inspector General Joseph Fisch said.

"Pro Care Contracting wrongfully attempted to manipulate the state and be paid more than it should have," State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli said. "The company failed to take into account that there are many state agencies watching out for taxpayers and ensuring that taxpayers get the most for their money. My office will continue to work diligently with other state agencies to find those who are attempting to abuse taxpayer dollars and hold them accountable for their actions."

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