



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 29, 2015
Contact [John Milgrim](#): 518-474-1010

FORMER STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO CHARGES HE USED STATE ISSUED CREDIT CARD TO BUY GAS FOR PERSONAL USE MORE THAN 100 TIMES; TO PAY MORE THAN \$6,000 IN RESTITUION

BATH - New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy-Scott announced the guilty plea of a former State Department of Transportation (“DOT”) employee who used a State-issued credit card to buy gasoline for personal use more than 100 times in less than a year.

John T. Deebes, 36, of Canisteo, used his State-issued credit card to buy approximately \$6,000 worth of gasoline for his own personal use, often while he was out on sick leave and while suspended on an unrelated employment matter, Inspector General Leahy-Scott’s investigation found.

“This former employee engaged in a long-term scheme egregiously violating the public’s trust,” said Inspector General Leahy-Scott, “I will pursue and hold accountable any State workers who use government resources to improperly enrich themselves.”

Deebes, who had been employed as a DOT Engineer Technician since 2006, pleaded guilty to Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a felony. He pleaded guilty before the Hon. Marianne Furfure of Steuben County Court. He is scheduled to return for sentencing Sept. 22, 2016. As part of the plea, Deebes agreed to pay \$6,211 in restitution prior to his sentencing date.

Deebes, in an unrelated matter, was suspended without pay from March 25, 2014, through June 2, 2014. After returning to work, Deebes only reported to work for a few days. He called in sick for the majority of time until July 11, 2014, when he was terminated.

Inspector General Leahy-Scott’s investigation found that Deebes charged \$1,760 to his state credit card at various gas stations while he was out on suspension. In addition, there was more than \$2,250 in charges made at times when he had called in sick or was off duty. Deebes also failed to properly document an additional \$2,200 worth of purchases that he made while on duty as he was required to do.

The State-issued credit card is provided to certain State employees for business purposes only; and in this case in relation to the defendant’s employment with DOT.

Inspector General Leahy-Scott thanked Steuben County District Attorney Brooks Baker and his staff for prosecuting the case.