



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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NYS INSPECTOR GENERAL INVESTIGATION OF CONTRACT OVERBILLING RESULTS IN SENTENCING OF FORMER STATE OGS OFFICIAL

A former state engineer who received more than \$50,000 in construction equipment and home improvement materials from a contractor whose fraudulent billing he approved between 2006 and 2009 resulted in his sentencing today, according to New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott.

John Hall, 58, a former engineer-in-charge working for the State Office of General Services (OGS) was ordered to pay \$52,285, and sentenced to six months in jail and five years probation. Hall had pleaded guilty to charges of fraud in February following an investigation launched by the Inspector General's Office.

"State officials who abuse their authority for personal gain will be thoroughly investigated and held accountable for any fraud or crime they perpetrate. Hall, as the engineer-in-charge, admitted to receiving bribes and enriching himself. His actions are outrageous, warranting that he be held fully accountable for his criminal conduct. As a result of this investigation and prosecution, the people of the State of New York will receive the return of money stolen from the state."

In August 2013, Hall was indicted and arraigned in Seneca County Court for his part in the scheme by approving fraudulent expense reports on the contracts in exchange for benefits, including the receipt of construction and home improvement equipment and materials. On February 21, 2014, Hall pleaded guilty to one count of bribe receiving and one count of defrauding the government and will pay restitution of \$52,285.

The Inspector General initiated the investigation in October 2009 after OGS officials notified the Inspector General that their internal review of contract documents led them to suspect an overbilling had taken place. Working in concert with the Office of State Comptroller (OSC) and OGS, the Inspector General's office examined 16 contracts between 2006 and 2009. Most of the work was done at state correctional facilities.

Hall was sentenced today by the Hon. Dennis Bender of Seneca County Court to restitution of \$52,285, six months in jail and five years probation. Inspector General Scott thanked the OGS Commissioner for referring the matter to her office. Additionally, she thanked OSC and the New York State Attorney General for their assistance in the investigation and prosecution of Hall.

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