



NEWS RELEASE

From New York State Inspector General
Catherine Leahy Scott

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STATE EMPLOYEES CHARGED WITH STEALING WAGES FOR RESPONDING TO FIRE ALARMS THAT NEVER OCCURRED AND OTHER SCHEMES

ALBANY – New York State Inspector General Catherine Leahy Scott today announced the arrest of two safety and security officers for the State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), on charges they stole nearly \$13,000 from the State by purportedly responding on overtime to fire alarms at OPWDD facilities when no alarms in fact occurred, and by responding to fire calls with their community volunteer fire department without taking time off from their State job, among other schemes.

Jason Dean, 30, of Sinpatch Road, Wassaic, was charged with 41 counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree and one count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, felonies. He was accused of stealing \$5,022.43 for hours he charged the State as if he was working but actually was not.

Mark Christiansen, 52, of Quail Lane, Dover Plains, was charged with 40 counts of Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree and one count of Grand Larceny in the Third Degree, felonies. He was accused of stealing \$7,855.70 for hours he charged the State as if he was working but actually was not.

An investigation by Inspector General Leahy Scott found the two, between winter 2014 and spring 2016, repetitively used various schemes to steal State wages they did not earn. During the time period, Dean and Christiansen filed for overtime for responding to alarms at OPWDD facilities that occurred during their regular work hours, filed for overtime pay for responding to purported fire alarms at their facilities when no alarms actually occurred, and left their State job to attend calls as volunteers with the Wassaic Fire Company without taking time off as required.

“These two defendants used their positions as government employees and as community volunteers to repeatedly over two years engage in criminal schemes stealing from taxpayers and violating the public trust,” said Inspector General Leahy Scott. “I will use all resources at my disposal to pursue anyone who so brazenly uses public service to develop illicit schemes for personal enrichment.”

Dean and Christiansen were arraigned today in the Town of Amenia Court and released pending their next court date of Jan. 16, 2017.

Inspector General Leahy Scott thanked the New York State Police for their assistance with the arrests and Dutchess County District Attorney William V. Grady and his office for prosecuting this matter.

The defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

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