



Department of Investigation

Press Release

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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION SUPERVISING EXTERMINATOR ARRESTED FOR FRAUDULENT COMMERCIAL LICENSE

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation ("DOI"), today announced that a Department of Correction ("DOC") employee has been arrested and charged with submitting a fraudulent commercial exterminating license to DOC. JOHN SAMBUKO, a supervising exterminator assigned to Rikers Island, surrendered to DOI investigators this morning.

According to Commissioner Gill Hearn, SAMBUKO altered an expired license and, in May of this year, submitted it to DOC's Director of Environmental Health Services, who unwittingly listed SAMBUKO's false certification on an agency registration form required by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ("DEC"). Later, after DOC supervisors noticed an irregularity on SAMBUKO's license, they asked DEC to verify his status. DEC's Division of Environmental Enforcement determined that, contrary to the information SAMBUKO had provided, SAMBUKO has not held a valid commercial exterminating license since 1997.

Commissioner Gill Hearn said, "By falsifying his own credentials, this supervisor undermined the integrity of the environmental controls intended to protect the health and safety of DOC's staff, inmates, and visitors." Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked both the DEC and DOC Commissioner William J. Fraser and his staff for their assistance in the investigation.

JOHN SAMBUKO, age 55, resides at 8020 Bay Parkway in Brooklyn. He has been employed as a DOC exterminator for the past 10 years and was recently promoted to a supervisory position with a base annual salary of \$30,389. SAMBUKO has been charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, and Tampering with Public Records in the First Degree, all class D felonies, and Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony. If convicted, he faces up to 7 years imprisonment. He has been suspended from his position without pay.

The investigation was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner Michael Caruso and members of his staff, including First Deputy Inspector General Josephine Pradegan, Supervising Investigator Migdalia Figueroa, and Special Investigator William Holland. The Office of Bronx District Attorney Robert T. Johnson is prosecuting the case, which has been assigned to Assistant District Attorney Jennifer Ramos.

The charge is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until convicted in court.