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Steamfitter steals $20,000 in supplies from DOE Report Released Today

Today, Special Commissioner of Investigation Richard J. Condon released a report detailing an investigation which found that Philip Szot, a steamfitter employed by the Department of Education ("DOE"), ordered copper pipe and associated materials purportedly for repairs at nine school buildings, but diverted these materials to his own use. Szot charged the cost of the materials – more than $20,000 – to the DOE. During the course of this investigation, Szot tried to enlist the help of colleagues employed by the DOE Division of School Facilities ("DSF") to conceal his theft. Szot asked DOE employees for money to purchase replacements of the items he had stolen. He also asked them for help in secretly delivering the replacements to school storerooms to create the impression that no theft had occurred.

Szot ordered copper pipe and associated supplies (collectively, "copper") for repair jobs at nine DOE schools in Manhattan. With the assistance of DSF supervisors, investigators from the office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation inventoried the copper which Szot installed, and compared it to the copper he documented on his DOE purchase orders. They determined that Szot ordered copper valued at more than $47,000 and more than $21,000 of that copper was missing.

Commissioner Condon recommended that Szot be dismissed from his employment with the DOE, and has referred the matter to Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau for whatever action he deems appropriate.

The Office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation is part of the New York City Department of Investigation and Special Commissioner Condon reports to Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn.