



# Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **FULTON COUNTY INSPECTOR INDICTED ON BRIBERY CHARGES**

### ***Erosion Control Inspector Arraigned Today***

Atlanta, GA - DON MITCHELL, 56, of Atlanta, Georgia, an erosion control inspector employed by Fulton County, Georgia, has been indicted by a federal grand jury on charges of bribery and defrauding the citizens of Fulton County of their right to expect his faithful and honest services. The indictment, which was filed on May 15, 2007, was unsealed today and MITCHELL was arraigned before United States Magistrate Judge Christopher Hagy.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "We cannot tolerate public servants who solicit or accept bribes. The public has the right to expect that government employees from all jurisdictions and at all levels are acting honestly and faithfully. Taking advantage of a government position to solicit or accept a bribe is one sure way to end up as a federal criminal defendant. We commend the grading contractor from whom this defendant allegedly solicited bribes, who did the right thing by notifying the FBI of the crime and cooperating fully in the investigation. Anyone with information concerning corrupt solicitations by MITCHELL or other officials is encouraged to call the Atlanta Division of the FBI at (404) 679-9000."

According to Nahmias and the documents and information presented in court: MITCHELL, an inspector with the Fulton County Erosion and Sedimentation Control Division, on three occasions in March and April 2007, solicited and accepted bribes in connection with official county business, including two cash payments totaling \$1,000 as well as a \$100 gift card to Red Lobster. MITCHELL allegedly solicited and received these payments from a grading contractor who was a subject of MITCHELL's inspections, and whom he had ticketed for alleged erosion violations carrying up to \$25,000 in fines.

The fraud charges allege that MITCHELL not only solicited and accepted these payments, but also concealed that he was receiving them, which is a conflict of interest in exercising his county duties. In connection with the ticket he issued to the grading

contractor, MITCHELL appeared in state court without disclosing to the judge that he had been paid over \$1,000 by the subject of the ticket.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment only contains charges. The defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government's burden to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Assistant United States Attorney Justin S. Anand is prosecuting the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is [www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan).