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INVESTIGATION REVEALS THAT SEWERAGE AND WATER BOARD EMPLOYEES CONTINUE TO MISUSE HANDICAP HANG-TAGS

As detailed in the Report of Investigation released today, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an investigation of the Sewerage & Water Board Employees' Fraudulent Utilization of Handicap Hang-tags for the period of October 27, 2021 through November 4, 2021.

OIG investigators found that 26 vehicles that were registered to a S&WB employee or their relative possessed a handicap hang-tag and parked in a metered parking space in the immediate vicinity of the S&WB Office. These 26 S&WB employees may be depriving the City of approximately \$132,957 per year in parking meter revenue because 19 were not entitled to any handicap parking privileges and the other seven, who legitimately possessed a handicap hang-tag, exceeded the three-hour free parking benefit.

The OIG recommended that S&WB management and other City departments ensure the following:

1. All employees must pay the metered parking rate, and vehicles with insufficient meter time should be ticketed.
2. Employees improperly using handicap hang-tags to park in metered parking spaces should be ticketed.
3. Any vehicle bearing a handicap hang-tag that remains in a metered parking space beyond the three-hour free parking benefit without paying for additional time limit should be ticketed.

In addition, Parking Control officers should monitor vehicles parked in metered spaces, including those bearing handicap hang-tags in the vicinity of the S&WB Office and those parked on St. Charles Avenue, for potential violations.

"The OIG has suggested to DPW that they aggressively enforce insufficient meter time violations associated with handicap hang-tags immediately to ensure that individuals with valid handicap hang-tags have the ability to park in the vicinity of the S&WB main office."

-Edward Michel, Inspector General

In addition to today's report, the OIG released a brief with highlights. Go to www.nolaoig.gov to view all OIG reports.

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