

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney***

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***More Information?*** Call the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

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***Go to:*** <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/index.html>

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 26, 2007

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Former Passaic Valley Water Commission Employee  
Admits Taking Bribes for Official Action, Inaction

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(More)

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Public Affairs Office  
Michael Drewniak, PAO

973-645-2888

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NEWARK – A Passaic Valley Water Commission (PVWC) official pleaded guilty today to a one-count Information charging him with soliciting and accepting corrupt payments for his official action and inaction as an employee of the water commission, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Robert Schweidereick, 57, of Pt. Charlotte, Fla. (formerly of Pompton Lakes), was an employee of the PVWC when he took more than \$800 in cash from a local property manager who was in fact cooperating with the FBI and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Inspector General.

PVWC is headquartered in Clifton, and services the cities of Paterson, Passaic, Clifton, Lodi, West Milford, North Arlington and Elmwood Park. Schweidereick's responsibilities included activating water service for new tenants in Paterson and turning off water service at those properties where the responsible party had failed to timely pay water bills.

He was initially arrested and charged in March 2007. He remains free on \$25,000 bond pending sentencing.

Schweidereick admitted before U.S. District Judge Jose L. Linares that he met with the property manager on multiple occasions between Jan. 25, 2006 and May 25, 2006, and negotiated a payment of \$50 for each property for which Schweidereick took official action or inaction as opportunities arose.

During his meetings with the property manager, Schweidereick accepted cash totaling more than \$800 for turning or keeping water service on at locations Schweidereick believed were managed by the cooperating witness. Schweidereick also introduced the property manager to another PVWC employee who was to take over for Schweidereick and receive the unlawful payments when Schweidereick retired at the end of May 2006. (That person was not identified during today's proceeding.)

The charge to which Schweidereick pleaded guilty, attempting to extort money under color of official right, carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

U.S. District Judge Jose L. Linares scheduled sentencing for Nov. 1.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's Garret Mountain Resident Agency in West Paterson, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weyan Dun, and Special Agents from HUD OIG, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Rene Febles, with the investigation that resulted in today's guilty plea. Christie also credited Assistant U.S. Attorney Hope Olds of the Office's Special Prosecutions Division, who is prosecuting the case.

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Defense Counsel: Joseph R. Donahue, River Edge

