

# **Former Pontoon Beach water district supervisor admits to embezzlement and wire fraud**

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**EAST ST. LOUIS** - Brian Buske, 44, of Alton, Illinois, entered a plea of guilty to an indictment charging wire fraud in a scheme to defraud the Pontoon Beach Water District, in Madison County, Illinois, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, Donald S. Boyce, announced Tuesday.

Buske faces a statutory maximum prison sentence of up to 20 years, a fine of up to \$250,000, three years of supervised release and mandatory restitution. Sentencing is scheduled for July 21, 2017.

Buske was employed by the Pontoon Beach Water District from 2007 through June of 2016. In approximately May of 2014, Buske was promoted to the position of supervisor. As supervisor, Buske managed the daily operations of the company, Buske also handled the daily financial transactions of the company in that he issued checks to pay other companies for equipment or services rendered.

In May of 2016, the Chairperson of the Pontoon Water District Board noticed that the District was a month behind in making the bank deposits. The missing deposits were not located within the safe. On May 27, 2016, Buske was confronted about the missing funds. Buske then retrieved four deposit summaries with the corresponding checks and cash from his truck

Four additional deposits were found to be missing. Buske admitted to taking the money and later returned with \$5,323 in cash, the amount of money corresponding to the records of the missing deposits. Further investigation revealed that records of the Pontoon, the U.S. Attorney's office said.

Beach Water District had been falsified to cover up personal expenses that Buske made on the District's credit card. Check stubs were supposed to record the payment of legitimate District expenses, but some of the stubs falsified who the payee was to conceal personal expenses made by Buske that included the payment of an electric bill, insurance, cell phone bills and other personal expenses. The total misappropriated funds was in excess of \$10,000, the U.S. Attorney's office reported.

The prosecution is the result of an investigation by the Pontoon Beach Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the cooperation of the Pontoon Beach Water District. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Norman R. Smith.