



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTROLS SHOULD BE STRENGTHENED TO MINIMIZE RISKS AT THE DPW
HUNDREDS OF SMALL EQUIPMENT INVENTORY ITEMS STORED IN DOZENS OF LOCATIONS

Kingston, NY (October 27, 2016) – The Office of the Ulster County Comptroller concluded an audit of small “handheld” or “walkable” equipment (i.e. trimmers, edgers, leaf blowers, chainsaws, etc.) that is assigned to the Department of Public Works (DPW). A number of items were unidentifiable due to missing serial numbers; twelve items had serial numbers that were incorrectly recorded and five items, including three snow blowers, one weed whacker, and one tractor are untraceable and could not be detected on the inventory listing provided.

After sampling from 460 items assigned to 21 different locations the audit made numerous recommendations including:

- Conduct and document an inventory audit on an annual basis
- Secure facilities where equipment is stored
- Engrave unique consecutive identifying numbers on all small equipment
- Segregate the duties of receiving, entering, assigning and deleting small equipment
- Develop comprehensive policies and procedures that account for and safeguard equipment

“It’s encouraging to learn that the DPW is making an effort to embrace technology to assist them in record keeping, and that will certainly eliminate several concerns. But the access to inventory, the disposal of obsolete equipment and the discrepancy in budgetary line item codes are all areas that could be strengthened to minimize risk and protect taxpayers’ dollars,” stated Comptroller Elliott Auerbach.

“Unaccounted for equipment presents a challenge and is reminiscent of an earlier investigation that led to the criminal prosecution of a former County employee. I can only hope that the inventory in question has been misplaced or misidentified,” Auerbach said.

The report can be found on the Comptroller’s website at www.YourEyesOnUlster.com or at the link:
<http://tinyurl.com/hcczp25>

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