

# Heroin arrest at Smithtown highway yard

Tip from parents about drug buy  
leads to investigation; four busted

By DAVID AMBRO

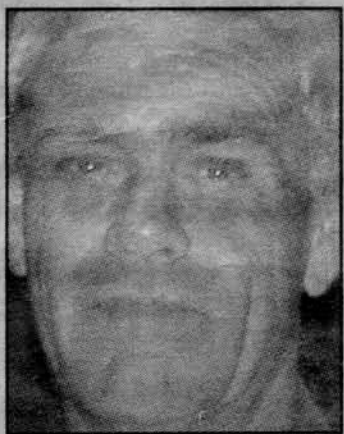
Four Smithtown Highway Department employees were arrested at the highway yard on Route 347 in Smithtown Friday, February 5 on drug charges, two with heroin and two with marijuana, according to Smithtown Town officials.

The arrests were the result of a joint investigation by the Smithtown Department of Public Safety and the Suffolk County Police Department Drug Task Force which was initiated by Smithtown Highway Superintendent Glenn Jorgensen after he received a tip from a parent whose child had allegedly purchased heroin from one of the employees, according to town officials.

A spokesperson for the Suffolk County Police Department declined to release any information this week about the case, and referred a request

for information to the Smithtown Department of Public Safety. During an interview at Smithtown Town Hall Tuesday, February 9 Town Director of Public Safety John Valentine said the case is under ongoing investigation and he declined to comment.

Mr. Jorgensen said during an interview Tuesday that he suspended the four employees Monday for 30 days without pay pending a disciplinary hearing. Mr. Jorgensen said during the period of the suspension



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**-Glenn Jorgensen  
Highway superintendent  
on the drug problem  
in the department**

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# Tip to Jorgensen led to drug probe, bust

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he will seek to have the employees terminated from their highway department jobs.

"I've been here for five weeks and I am working to clean up this problem. I am going to be very strict about this and we are going to clean it up," Mr. Jorgensen said. "This is a problem that I am seriously going to straighten out."

Mr. Jorgensen said he received the tip from the parent about the town workers selling heroin about a week prior to the arrest and that he immediately reported it to law enforcement authorities. According to Mr. Jorgensen,

law enforcement officers began following the suspects and conducted videotape surveillance of their activities.

"I told them what happened and what was said to me and asked them to help me fix it, and they helped me fix it," Mr. Jorgensen said. "They stepped up to the plate and they did it fast and they did it quiet."

Highway workers were at the highway yard Friday, February 5 preparing for the snow storm that was forecast but never came Saturday, when suddenly a large law enforcement team arrived at the highway yard to make the arrests. Mr. Jorgensen said the suspects were taken

from their town trucks and brought into the highway superintendent's office and questioned. He declined to disclose the names of the arrested employees.

According to town officials, two of the men were found with heroin and drug paraphernalia in their possession and were arrested on the spot. The other two were found with marijuana. They were served with field appearance tickets to appear in court at a later date, and were not taken into custody.

Mr. Jorgensen, who had worked in the highway department for 37 years prior to his retirement two years

ago and subsequent election as highway superintendent in November, said he was surprised by the drug case. "I didn't know the department was so infested," he said.

In the wake of the arrests, Mr. Jorgensen said he met Tuesday with the foremen and that he intends to meet with the workers to initiate new programs to rid the department of drug abuse. He said that he intends to have a drug expert come in to speak to the men about their options, and that he will offer a treatment program to drug addicts who cooperate. "I'm giving them a chance to come forward and say 'I have a problem help me,' and then they can keep their jobs. But if they don't come forward and they get caught they are going to be terminated," he said.

Kelly Brown, president of the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) Smithtown units, the union that represents the workers, said during an interview Tuesday that she has not yet seen the official town charges or the criminal charges against the four employees, so she was limited in her comment. "The union is in the process of obtaining legal representation for them and we will go from there," she said.

"Our Public Safety Department has been very

proactive in patrolling our parks, which is their specific duty and last year they made 69 drug arrests. In fact, one of those drug arrests resulted in a major drug bust on Brookside Drive," said Smithtown Supervisor Patrick Vecchio during an interview in his office Monday, February 8. "I compliment our public safety officers in the diligent response that resulted in the highway department employees being arrested last week."

Mr. Vecchio said he was surprised by the news when he was advised of the arrests Friday afternoon. "My initial reaction was one of shock and wonderment as to who those highway workers were not better supervised and I credit Mr. Valentine and his staff for acting with dispatch with the information provided by Mr. Jorgensen," Mr. Vecchio said. "I wonder where the foremen were and I wonder where the highway superintendent was last year when his employees were engaged in this activity."

Sources in the highway department provided The Smithtown News with the names of the four employees, however, the names have not been published because they could not be confirmed this week by law enforcement sources or through court records.