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LONG ISLAND

Drug-ring charges for six

BY ANDREW SMITH
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A Town of Brookhaven highway department worker dealt cocaine and oxycodone with the help of a former New York City police officer, Suffolk District Attorney Thomas Spota said yesterday.

Six men were charged in an indictment accusing them of taking part in the drug ring. They are expected to be arraigned today in Suffolk County Court.

The ringleader was Thomas Forkin, 30, of Miller Place, a laborer in the highway department, Spota said. He organized sales from Coram north to Port Jefferson, and along the North Shore between Stony Brook and Rocky Point, Spota said. At times, he dealt drugs on town time and in town vehicles, and some of his customers were town workers, Spota said. "He ran his criminal enterprise at the expense of town taxpayers," Spota said.

Forkin's boss, outgoing Highway Superintendent John Rouse, did not respond to requests for comment, but in a statement said he hopes the "criminal activity of a few" won't tarnish the reputation of co-workers. Rouse will become a county court judge next month.

Forkin's attorney, William Keahon, of Hauppauge, could not be reached for comment, but earlier this month said he expects Forkin to be "totally vindicated."

Town Supervisor Ed Romaine said he has little control over the highway department and called the charges "disheartening." He said he will work with Rouse's successor to clean up the department.

Spota said the investigation found that town highway workers often knew when random drug tests were coming and could make sure they passed them.

Former NYPD Officer Thomas Girona, 44, of Setauket, was charged as well. Spota said Girona, a former narcotics officer in Queens, sold drugs at his business, New Look Concrete Design in Setauket.

All six men are charged with second-degree conspiracy and various drug charges. Forkin also is charged with operating as a major drug trafficker, which carries a maximum penalty of 25 years to life in prison.

The others charged are Timothy Ruttura, 35, of South Setauket; Johnny Vargas, 30, of South Setauket; Anthony Perretta, 30, of Lake Grove; and Joseph Finch, 25, of Miller Place.

INDICTED



Thomas Forkin, Brookhaven worker



Thomas Girona, ex-NYPD officer



Timothy Ruttura, of South Setauket



Johnny Vargas, of South Setauket



Anthony Perretta, of Lake Grove



Joseph Finch, of Miller Place

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