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# Newsday

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SUNNY

## SHARK

Possible attacks  
on 2 kids close  
South Shore beaches  
**A2 | VIDEO AT NEWSDAY.COM**



Casey Murphy, 18, of Wantagh, caught a shark off Kismet on Fire Island Wednesday.

DEVINT KENNEDY

## NASSAU ASSESSMENTS

More than half of  
homeowners filed  
grievance this year

**A6**

# INSIDE ILLEGAL DUMPING SCHEME

DA: 'Dirt broker' used bogus  
lab results to put debris  
in homeowners' backyards

**A3 | UPDATES AT NEWSDAY.COM**

# HITTING 'PAY DIRT'

LI broker called heart of illegal dumping scheme

BY RACHELLE BLIDNER  
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An undercover operation that netted dozens of arrests Tuesday on illegal dumping charges centered on a dirt broker who offered residents clean fill and instead arranged for debris and solid waste to be placed on their properties, Suffolk County District Attorney Timothy Sini said.

Anthony C. Grazio, also known as Rock, was one of 24 people arrested in the months-long Operation Pay Dirt — the largest bust for illegal dumping of construction and demolition debris in the state's history, officials said.

The investigation also resulted in charges against 12 companies in connection with the dumping. Investigators seized 27 trucks and froze \$4.4 million in accounts, Sini announced at a Wednesday news conference in Brentwood State Park, near the site of some of the alleged dumping.

The investigation "uncovered an underground world of dirt brokers, solid waste facilities and trucking companies" working together to dump illegally, Sini said.

The work, part of a larger crackdown on illegal dumping launched by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo called Operation Trash-Net, also uncovered 21 new dumping sites, officials said. It was conducted by the district attorney's office, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Suffolk County police detectives.

Pay Dirt focused on 25 illegal dump sites, including backyards, public land, parks and properties next to bodies of water, Sini said. Investigators executed 20 search warrants, officials said.

Joseph Cozzo, an attorney for Grazio, 53, of Smithtown, and another defendant, Vito Fragola, 44, of Commack, said his clients deny the charges against them, including that Grazio is a dirt broker. He said third parties



Mounds of illegally dumped dirt, seen near Brentwood State Park, were discovered as part of Operation Pay Dirt's undercover investigation.

that Grazio and Fragola received fill from told them the materials were "up to code."

"They live here on the Island," Cozzo, whose office is in Central Islip, said of his clients. "The last thing they're looking to do is live somewhere and contaminate the place."

Investigators found Grazio brokered deals with recycling and solid waste management facilities and trucking companies to illegally dump construction and demolition debris into Suffolk parks and backyards, Sini said. Grazio also sold or offered clean fill to residents through online advertisements and door-to-door solicitation, and showed them "bogus lab reports" about the fill's contents, Sini said. Some homeowners paid the contractors to spread the fill in their yards, he added.

Grazio was charged with 50 felony counts, including criminal mischief, and 74 misdemeanors, according to court records. His bail was set at \$167,000 bond or \$77,000 cash, his attorney said.

A special grand jury was convened Wednesday to investigate, look into remediation and report on how to reduce illegal dumping, Sini said. Investigators also plan to seize and forfeit assets used in the scheme, Sini said.

The companies charged saved hundreds of thousands of dollars by dumping ille-

## ARRESTED IN THE CASE

Those arrested in Operation Pay Dirt's investigation of illegal dumping on LI:

**Jose Luis Adamez**, Bronx  
**Ivan Cesar Bermeo**, Queens  
**Chris C. Bonsera**, St. James  
**Michael C. Bonsera**, East Norwich  
**Alexander Canales**, Selden  
**Angel Cornejo**, Queens  
**Feliciano Cruz**, Queens  
**Gonzalo Figueroa-Marroquin**, Riverhead  
**Vito Fragola**, Commack  
**Anthony Grazio**, Smithtown  
**Michael Heinrichs**, Port Jefferson Station  
**Joseph Lamberta**, Hauppauge  
**Ramon Mejia-Hernandez**, Brooklyn  
**Carlos Melgar**, Patchogue  
**Yasmael Nunez**, Queens  
**Steven Nunezgenao**, Port Jefferson Station  
**Milan R. Parik**, Centereach  
**James Perruzza**, Fort Salonga  
**Frank Rotondo Jr.**, Northport

**Dwayne Sanders**, Central Islip  
**Alberto Santiago**, Shirley  
**Thomas R. StClair**, St. James  
**Wilfred Torres**, Ronkonkoma  
**Robert Walters**, Nesconset

### COMPANIES CHARGED

**DJCI Enterprises LLC**, Bay Shore  
**IEV Industries Corp.**, Bay Shore  
**Kris Trucking**, Queens  
**Modern Leasing aka Dumpmasters**, Bay Shore  
**Modern Leasing aka Silver Star**, Bay Shore  
**New York Trucking And Carting (NYTAC) Corp.**, West Babylon  
**Starfire Industries Inc.**, Medford  
**St. Clair/Clairco Industries LLC**, Medford  
**Durante Bros. Construction Corp.**, Queens  
**South Shore Materials**, Bay Shore  
**CSF Trucking**  
**C&L Materials**

gally, state Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos said at the news conference.

Legal disposal costs about \$1,500 per truckload of material on Long Island, and the cost can double or triple, depending on the contents, a DEC official said. Solid waste management facilities involved in the investigation paid trucking companies \$700 per load to haul the material away illegally, the official said. "They put the health of Suffolk County residents at risk for pure greed," Sini said.

Fragola was charged with a felony count of criminal mis-

chief and two misdemeanors, court records show. He also faces three drug possession-related charges, court records show. The suspects could face up to 7 years in prison per charge related to illegal dumping if convicted, Sini said.

Suffolk County Police Chief of Department Stuart Cameron said "it's very disturbing" that suspects "turned backyards into toxic waste dumps."

Officials announced the arrest next to a Brentwood North Middle School property that became an illegal dump site while a nonprofit youth soccer club was planning to refurbish it

and use it for soccer fields.

The illegal fill was disposed of by Durante Brothers Construction Corp. of Queens and brought to the middle school property by Smithtown-based CSF Materials Corp., Sini said. That deal was brokered by Christopher Bonsera, the brother of CSF owner Michael Bonsera, Sini said.

Tuesday's arrests were the most for illegal dumping in the state since 2001, officials said.

Authorities asked that anyone with information about illegal dumping call the district attorney's office at 631-853-5602 or DEC's tip hotline at 844-332-3267.

MICHAEL OWENS