



Ohio Department of Natural Resources

JOHN R. KASICH, GOVERNOR

JAMES ZEHRINGER, DIRECTOR

January 9, 2015

Randall J. Meyer
State of Ohio Inspector General
Rhodes State Office Tower
30 East Broad Street – Suite 2940
Columbus, OH 43215-3414

2015 JAN 12 PM 2:41
OFFICE OF
INSPECTOR GENERAL

Re: **File ID Number:** 2013-CA00051
Subject Name: Paul “Gus” Smithhisler
Agency: Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Allegations: Misrepresentation; Improper Billing by Vendor
Date of Report: November 10, 2014

Dear Mr. Meyer:

This correspondence responds to the above report. This letter is intended to address ODNR’s compliance with the recommendations set forth at page seven of that report.

In response to recommendation number one, ODNR has reviewed the actions of employee Paul Smithhisler. ODNR’s investigative file is not yet fully implemented. But Mr. Smithhisler’s conduct was outside of his employment authorization. Accordingly, it is expected that some level of employee discipline will ensue as a result of this follow up investigation. ODNR will supplement this update once that employment action is finalized.

With respect to items two and three of the recommendations, these involve compliance with ODOT processes for implementing and changing future joint paving projects. ODNR has met on several occasions with ODOT following the receipt of this investigation. Management processes are fully implemented that will ensure ODNR’s compliance with ODOT’s contract processes in regard to these future joint agency projects.

With respect to item four, within the next month, ODNR will meet with the subject vendor, Strawser Construction, as to the necessity of strict detailed billing compliance in the future. Further, ODNR’s internal review of the conduct of the employee Smithhisler has confirmed the existence of current operating protocols that will ensure that detailed billing information is provided relative to any future such paving projects.

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I trust that this information is useful to you in regard to the closure of this investigation. If there are questions regarding this correspondence, please contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. Zehringer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

James Zehringer
Director

JZ/MW/dm