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DA Charges Former County Employee with Profiting Off His Wife's County Contracts

San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan announced today that criminal charges have been filed against Rolf Bishop, 73, the former Chief Deputy for information systems at the San Diego County Assessors/Recorder/County Clerk's (ARCC) Office. Bishop was formally charged today with one felony count of violating Government Code Section 1090, which prohibits a county employee from being financially interested in any contract made by them in their official capacity.

Prosecutors allege that while Bishop was working in his capacity as Chief Information Officer, from March of 2017 to January of 2021, he recommended that a contractor hire his wife's company to do work for the County. He subsequently approved invoices related to her work and the work of her employees on ARCC projects. Investigators say the defendant and his wife may have personally profited by hundreds of thousands of dollars. Exact accounting details are expected to become public during the pendency of the criminal case.

"The defendant and anyone working for the government has a duty to the public to not violate the public's trust by using their position to unlawfully pad their own pockets," DA Stephan said. "It's critical that public corruption at all levels of government be investigated and prosecuted when the evidence meets the high burden of proof under the law."

This case was referred to the District Attorney by the San Diego County's Office of Ethics Compliance and is being prosecuted by the DA's Special Operations Division, which investigates cases involving misuse of public funds, political corruption, hate crimes, and criminal misconduct of government officials, including peace officers and other public employees.

Bishop was arraigned in San Diego Superior Court and pleaded not guilty. If convicted, he faces a fine and up to three years in prison. Bishop is no longer employed with the County of San Diego. A preliminary hearing in this case has been set for May 10.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.

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