

# Shakeup at parish DPW

## Director Martin retires

**THE ARREST OF THREE** parish employees last month for theft of a motor has widened into an investigation to track down a missing backhoe. In the wake of that development, Public Works Director Wayne Martin abruptly retired last week.

**By Alice Dowty**  
The Livingston Parish News  
**LIVINGSTON** — Parish President Mike Grimmer is questioning Department of Public Works employees about a missing John Deere backhoe, and has replaced the DPW director.  
Wayne Martin, who has been DPW director since 2005, elected to retire last week during investigations of possible wrong-doing that occurred while Martin had oversight responsibilities, Grimmer said.  
Planning Director

Randy Delatte has been named the new DPW director, Grimmer said.  
Three DPW employees were arrested Jan. 7 for the theft of an engine from a 2007 Dodge pickup truck belonging to the parish, according to the Sheriff's Office.  
The stolen engine



**Martin**

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was taken to the home of a DPW employee in the back of a parish truck, according to the Sheriff's Office.

The stolen engine replaced an engine in a private vehicle, Grimmer said.

The only connection between the stolen engine and the missing backhoe so far is that the engine theft started the investigation that identified a missing backhoe, Grimmer said.

"After the three arrests concerning missing DPW property, we started an inventory," Grimmer said.

That inventory raised questions about the disposition of a John Deere backhoe, Grimmer said.

The backhoe and paperwork on the backhoe are both missing, Grimmer said.

"We are checking all our records to see if possibly this large piece of equipment was properly

declared surplus, sold, and the proceeds deposited in a parish account," Grimmer said.

So far, such records have not been found, Grimmer said.

"DPW employees are being given the opportunity to speak to me directly and explain anything they might have seen or heard that bears on our internal investigation," Grimmer said.

The ongoing DPW inventory analysis is part of a larger crack-down on the legitimacy of DPW work orders.

"In addition to the inventory of equipment, my office is also getting information about the use of man-hours and materials that might not fall within the law," Grimmer said.

New DPW Director Delatte was formerly elected to the Livingston Parish Police Jury and served as Police Jury President. He also served as acting DPW director after the death of Grant Bankston.