



OFFICE OF THE
STATE AUDITOR

News Release
For Immediate Release
May 15, 2017

**Office of the State Auditor Releases Audit of
Department of Environmental Quality, Division of Water Quality**
*Identifies misappropriation of public funds
by a former employee*

Salt Lake City, UTAH –

The Office of the State Auditor (Office) today released its Audit of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Division of Water Quality (DWQ), identifying misappropriation of public funds by a former DWQ employee. The Office found that the former employee was improperly reimbursed for travel costs amounting to at least \$20,404 from July 2006 through October 2016 based on fictitious hotel invoices. The Office also estimates that \$124,049 in salary was paid to the employee during these purported business trips.

In late 2016, DEQ personnel found irregularities in a hotel invoice related to a travel reimbursement request submitted by this particular employee. When questioned, the employee resigned his position. DEQ began an investigation to identify the scope of the problem. DEQ noted that inappropriate travel reimbursements had occurred for at least several years. DEQ notified the Office to request assistance.

The Office conducted a more in-depth investigation and noted a pervasive pattern of questionable travel documentation dating back for at least a decade. The audit report details the findings and recommendations. We commend DEQ for initially identifying the problem and for involving the Office in its investigation.

The report may be found on the Office's website, auditor.utah.gov. The Report is available specifically at

<http://financialreports.utah.gov/saoreports/2017/DEQ-17-SPDEQDivofWtrQualityEnvironmentalQuality,Departmentof.pdf> .

About the Office of the State Auditor

The Office of the State Auditor provides Utah taxpayers and government officials with an independent assessment of financial operation, statutory compliance, and performance management for state and local government.

Specific activities of the Office include performing financial audits, conducting Federal funds compliance audits, providing local government oversight, conducting agency and program performance audits, performing fraud and compliance audits, and operating the State Auditor Hotline for citizens to report suspected financial issues or improprieties. These capabilities

strengthen Utah State Government and help taxpayers have confidence in the integrity of Utah's government agencies.

The State Auditor is a Constitutional Officer of the State of Utah, elected directly by the state's citizens every four years. The role of the State Auditor is authorized in Article VII, Section 15 of the Utah Constitution. For more information, see auditor.utah.gov.

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