

## Embezzlement probe at association ongoing

Former Illinois executive director under investigation

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WEST ALLIS, Wis.—Marsha Kopan, former executive director of the Illinois Electronic Security Association, is the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation that began when the West Allis Police arrested her on Sept. 24.

Police brought Kopan in on check fraud and forgery charges stemming from work she did with a non-security association. Upon further investigation into Kopan's business ties, authorities contacted the IESA, and suggested they take a look at their accounts. Kopan's paper and hard drive records were seized for the investigation and she was interviewed and subsequently released, according to Detective Jeff Nohelty of the West Allis Criminal Investigation Department.

"There's not much information I can release right now. As far as we can tell, she acted alone. She hasn't been officially charged yet by the DA," Nohelty said. "The DA's office has been brought in, but we just have a lot to go through and get done before we know what she'll be officially charged with." Nohelty said Kopan was cooperating with the investigation.

Kopan owns third-party management services company, Executive Secretarial Services, based here. According to Kopan's LinkedIn page, she had been the executive director of the IESA for 10 years. DMC Security's Chet Donati, who is president of the IESA, said Kopan did accounting work for IESA as well as at least two other, non-security-related associations, the United States Society for Ecological Economics, and the International Society for Ecological Economics.

*Security Systems News* called Kopan, who said she did not want to comment on the allegations.

Police say the investigation, which involves companies based in various states, as well as companies with international dealings, could escalate. "Depending on how big this gets—I mean, if all of a sudden it's more money than we thought—maybe the feds will want to look at it," Nohelty said. "That will be determined as this investigation continues." Nohelty said he hopes to be ready for a meeting with assistant District Attorney Kurt Bentley some time in early November.

Donati said the important thing now was to focus on association business and press on. "This is something that was totally unforeseen. I've always had the good of our association foremost in my mind and the bottom line is that we've just got to move ahead," Donati said. "We'll get past it, and we may even be better for it—who knows?"

Emergency 24 public relations manager Kevin Lehan has taken over executive director duties for the IESA. "It's just business as usual right now," Lehan said. Emergency 24 is also handling all website-related activities for the IESA, duties which used to be handled by Kopan.

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