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## Des Plaines woman gets 11 years for embezzlement

By

When Tammy Weart was questioned about the theft of nearly \$1.2 million from her Glendale Heights employer, she told authorities there weren't any life-changing events or financial hardships that led her to do it.

"I'm ashamed to say it," she told investigators. "I was greedy."

Weart, 53, of Des Plaines, was sentenced Friday to 11½ years in prison for stealing from Specialty Moving Systems on 96 occasions since 2003. She received the term in exchange for pleading guilty to theft over \$1 million and continuing a financial crimes enterprise.

Assistant DuPage County State's Attorney Helen Kapas said Weart admitted spending more than \$300,000 of the stolen funds on high-end jewelry. Weart also dined out and bought new clothes.

Kapas said Weart stole by setting up automated transactions that funneled money from the company, where she was controller, to her own account.

Glendale Heights police pieced together the scheme after a manager filled in while Weart was on medical leave and learned "their financial state was disastrous," Kapas said.

Prosecutors said Weart stole continuously for the duration of her seven years at Specialty Moving Systems, which offers transportation, storage and moving services, according to its website. When police asked why she took such a risk, Weart responded, "No one said anything so I just continued to do it."

Kapas said that as a result of the thefts, the company lost an important client and was forced to lay off some employees.

General Manager Don Sears said Friday the company since has rebounded and is having a strong year.

"We've recovered nicely and we're lucky that we did," he said. "We're a strong company."

By law, Weart must serve at least half of her sentence, with credit for time in the county jail since her indictment last December. She also was ordered to pay \$1.17 million in restitution, according to a plea agreement approved by Judge Robert Kleeman.

Kapas said police, during the course of the investigation, seized \$4,000 and some of the jewelry Weart bought with stolen funds. That property is being turned over to the company, she said.