

# Jackie Lacey

District Attorney

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NEWS RELEASE

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## Former County Engineer Pleads Guilty to Conflict of Interest

A former Los Angeles County power plant engineer pleaded guilty today to manipulating county bidding procedures in order to have contracts awarded to his friend's company, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Yuri Garabekyan, 64, pleaded guilty to one felony count of conflict of interest. He was immediately sentenced to probation for three years and ordered to perform 500 hours of community service.

Deputy District Attorney Bjorn Dodd of the Public Integrity Division prosecuted the case.

Garabekyan worked as a chief station engineer at the Pitchess Cogeneration Plant in Castaic. He steered million-dollar contracts to a friend's company to advance his own financial interests, the prosecutor said.

Heat Transfer Solutions (HTS) was awarded a \$1.4 million contract in July 2010. Two months later, the company's vice president – with whom Garabekyan had a personal relationship – purchased real estate in Nevada from the defendant for \$200,000. In July 2011, a second contract was awarded to HTS for \$1.2 million.

Case BA460430 was investigated by the Office of County Investigations, Los Angeles County Auditor Controller's Office.

### [About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.