



**Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury**

*July 29, 2022*

## **Former Hardin County Road Superintendent Indicted on Two Counts**

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office has resulted in the indictment of Steven Cromwell, the former Hardin County Road Superintendent.

Comptroller investigators revealed that Cromwell used \$20,750 of department funds to pave a driveway on private property. Cromwell made an agreement with the private property owner to pave the driveway in exchange for .53 acres of land needed to build a county bridge.

Investigators searched Hardin County land records and were unable to find any legal instrument showing conveyance of the necessary interest in the land; therefore, the county bridge was improperly constructed on private property.

Based on state property records, the .53 acres in question were valued at \$1,749. By paving the landowner's driveway, the Hardin County Highway Department effectively overpaid approximately \$19,001 to acquire the land needed for bridge construction. Moreover, the department was eligible to receive a 100% state reimbursement if it had properly purchased the land.

Additionally, Comptroller investigators determined that Cromwell falsified invoices to purchase a truck for \$15,170. The purchase transaction was split into separate invoices in order to avoid bidding requirements that apply to any purchase over \$10,000. Cromwell instructed a department employee to misclassify some of the truck expenditures as "hauling" costs.

Steven Cromwell resigned from his position as road superintendent on September 30, 2021. Based upon this investigation, in July 2022, the Hardin County Grand Jury indicted Steven Cromwell on one count of forgery, and one count of destruction of and tampering with governmental records.

"The Hardin County Road Commission must ensure it's reviewing itemized invoice information when approving the highway department's monthly expenditures," said Comptroller Mumpower. "By improving its oversight, the commission can help detect improper activity."

To view the investigative report, go to [tncot.cc/doireports](https://tncot.cc/doireports). To view a map depicting Comptroller investigations, go to [tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations](https://tncot.cc/mappinginvestigations).

If you suspect fraud, waste, or abuse of public money in Tennessee, call the Comptroller's toll-free hotline at 800.232.5454, or file a report online at: [tncot.cc/fraud](https://tncot.cc/fraud). Follow us on twitter [@TNCOT](https://twitter.com/TNCOT) and Instagram [@tncot](https://www.instagram.com/tncot).

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