

# Former plumbers union president indicted for embezzlement

A grand jury in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas indicted William I. "Willie" Brown, former president of the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union 237 in Texarkana, on multiple counts of embezzlement.

Matthew D. Orwig, the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, and Roger Hilburn, a regional director for the U.S. Labor Department's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA), claimed that Brown allegedly embezzled at least \$80,000 from the union's apprenticeship and training fund and its general fund. Brown allegedly embezzled the funds while he was union president, between late 1997 and late 2002.

Brown faces up to five years in prison and a maximum \$250,000 fine. According to Hilburn, "This indictment should send a strong message to all union representatives responsible for pension, health and welfare plans that the EBSA and our federal law enforcement partners will vigorously pursue criminal misconduct."

**Final tip:** Do you know the signs that an employee is doctoring the books or is on the take? Classic symptoms include unexplained spending on luxury items and never taking time off (for fear someone else will look at the books).