

**[ ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 102, September  
11, 1939 ]**

**REPRIMANDING PROVINCIAL TREASURER SATURNINO DAVID  
OF LAGUNA**

This is an administrative case filed by the municipal mayor of Santa Cruz, Laguna, against Mr. Saturnino David, provincial treasurer of Laguna, who is charged with removing the water meters installed in the provincial courthouse, the provincial high school building, and the provincial jail, without authority.

It appears that on December fourteenth, nineteen hundred and thirty-six, the respondent submitted a petition, through the Waterworks Board of which he was the chairman, to the municipal council of Santa Cruz, asking that the method of collection for the municipal water service in the provincial courthouse, the provincial high school building, and the provincial jail be changed from actual consumption basis to a flat rate basis for each building. In spite of the favorable recommendation of the Waterworks Board, the municipal council of Santa Cruz, on February sixth, nineteen hundred and thirty-seven, denied the said petition. This action of the municipal council was approved by the provincial board on February twenty-third, nineteen hundred and thirty-seven. Nevertheless, the respondent, on or about July seventeenth, nineteen hundred and thirty-seven, ordered the removal of the water meters installed in the said buildings.

The respondent admits having ordered the removal of the water meters, as charged, but states that he did so because he saw no reason for the application of different bases of collection for water service in the different public buildings, stating, in this connection, that the capitol building is charged on the fiat rate basis.

It is evident that the respondent acted not only without authority but in open disregard of the decision of the municipal council of Santa Cruz, Laguna. If he believed that the action of the municipal council and the provincial board was irregular, he should have asked for a reconsideration of his petition or appealed to the higher authorities for redress. Instead of doing this, he took the law in his hands. There is, however, the mitigating circumstance in favor of the respondent that he was motivated by the desire to save the provincial government from what he considered an excessive or unjust charge and at the same time to correct what he also considered to be a violation of waterworks regulations; namely, the lack of uniformity of basis in the collection for water service in different public buildings. Moreover, the respondent did not profit therefrom, the loss to the municipality in income becoming a saving to the province in expenditure.

In view of the foregoing, and concurring in the recommendation of the Secretary of Finance, the respondent, Saturnino David, provincial treasurer of Laguna, is hereby reprimanded and warned that the commission of a similar irregularity in the future will be more severely dealt with.