



NSCB News Release



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CONTRACTORS BOARD JOINS WESTERN STATES IN JOINT STING TARGETING UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS ADVERTISING ON CRAIGSLIST

HENDERSON, Nev. – The Nevada State Contractors Board (NSCB) in partnership with contractor boards from Arizona, California, and Oregon, and also the National Association of State Contractor Licensing Agencies (NASCLA) coordinated a multi-day joint sting event targeting individuals advertising on craigslist without a license and contracting without a license. NSCB held stings in Carson City, Elko, Las Vegas, and Reno over a two-day period netting 23 citations against unlicensed contractors.

“Contracting without a contractor’s license is a serious offense, which ultimately increases a homeowner’s risk and liability when having work performed on their home,” said Margi A. Grein, NSCB executive officer. “The opportunity to team up with other states to educate consumers on ways to protect themselves and demonstrate a unified zero-tolerance stance on the issue is invaluable and one that we hope to initiate again in the future.”

NSCB advises homeowners utilizing online sources, such as craigslist, to search for advertisements placed by contractors to perform various types of work to do so with caution. It is important homeowners remember:

- Plumbing, electrical, and HVAC services require a licensed contractor in the State of Nevada– these services *cannot* be performed by a “handyman”;
- All advertisements for work requiring a contractor’s license must have a contractor’s license number posted on the advertisement;
- Homeowners who contract with unlicensed contractors are not eligible for the Residential Recovery Fund;
- Contracts made with an unlicensed contractor are not recognized/valid in the State of Nevada; and
- Always verify the contractor’s license number on NSCB’s website at www.nscb.nv.gov

Below are details of each alleged violation for which a citation was issued:

(continued)

SUSPECT'S NAME	CITY	AGE	VIOLATION
Blake L. Martin	Reno	37	Contracting and advertising without a license
Michael H. Moreth	Reno	58	Advertising and contracting without a license
Daniel C. Perry	Reno	29	Advertising without a license
Remberto A. Ayala	Carson City	52	Advertising without a license
Devin A. Palmer	Carson City	25	Advertising without a license
Elizabeth E. Stearns	Carson City	46	Advertising without a license
Tyrell M. Swap	Carson City	32	Advertising without a license
William J. Beard	Elko	23	Contracting without a license
Michael R. Galgiani	Reno	39	Contracting without a license
William P. Neidinger	Reno	50	Contracting without a license
Santos T. Gomez	Los Angeles	43	Advertising without a license
Brandon D. Howard	N. Las Vegas	30	Advertising without a license
Joseph Saenz	N. Las Vegas	29	Advertising without a license
Armando Cuevas	Las Vegas	42	Advertising without a license
Donald Allison	Henderson	42	Advertising without a license
William McCracken	Las Vegas	66	Advertising without a license
Clifford W. Mondello	Henderson	65	Advertising without a license
Luis N. Castellanos	Las Vegas	40	Advertising without a license
Douglas E. Thompson	Henderson	60	Advertising without a license
Carlos M. Espinosa	Las Vegas	30	Advertising without a license
Jerry L. White	Las Vegas	53	Advertising without a license
Jason A. Gomez	Las Vegas	36	Advertising without a license
John J. Halczak	Las Vegas	46	Advertising without a license

NSCB encourages consumers looking for contractors to perform work to follow these ten tips:

1. Only hire licensed contractors.
2. Check the contractor's license number by utilizing our Online Contractor Search at www.nscb.nv.gov
3. Get three references and review past work.
4. Get at least three bids.
5. Get a written contract and do not sign anything until you completely understand the terms.
6. For pool contracts, pay 10% down or \$1,000 - whichever is less, if a deposit is required.
7. Don't let payments get ahead of the work. Keep a record of all payments.
8. Don't make a final payment until you are satisfied with the job.
9. Don't pay cash.
10. Keep a job file of all papers relating to your project.

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Reports and quotes from partnering agencies:



In Arizona a person commits a Class 1 Misdemeanor by (1) advertising to perform services that require a contractor's license, and/or (2) acting in the capacity of a contractor without a license. The Arizona sting led to 15 unlicensed contractor investigations. The ROC routinely refers unlicensed contracting cases to the Maricopa County Attorney's office for prosecution.

Arizona Registrar Bill Mundell said, "Joining with three other western states in conducting this unlicensed contractor sting was a historic event. This combined effort demonstrates our shared commitment to protecting honest people from the harm caused by unlicensed contractors. In order to protect Arizonans we have and will vigorously enforce the unlicensed contractor laws."



The Oregon sting led to 31 unlicensed contractor investigations. Oregon Board Administrator Craig P. Smith said, "Oregon's commitment to protect consumers and level the playing field for legitimate contractors is critical in the agency mission. Being united with other states helps build public confidence and trust."



The California sting led to the arrest of 100 suspects. Three-quarters were identified from craigslist ads. One suspect is a convicted murderer; two others are registered sex offenders. All suspects now face a variety of misdemeanor charges, including contracting without a license and illegal advertising.

California Registrar Steve Sands said, "Craigslist serves as a valuable tool to legitimately licensed and insured contractors, offering them a free advertising vehicle to connect with consumers. Unfortunately, hundreds if not thousands of unlicensed or unscrupulous contractors are breaking the law every day by posting deceptive or illegal ads and craigslist has done little to address the issue."

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The NASCLA goal of the national sting operation was to bring the western states together through a united partnership to combat illegal construction activities and bring consumer awareness to the forefront. Along with showing the positive impact that the contractor state licensing boards are displaying and the efforts they are taking to protect the public. NASCLA President, Craig P. Smith, stated that, “Non- licensed contractors are a danger to consumers and give the construction industry a black eye. NASCLA congratulates the fine work of the state investigators that participated in this enforcement effort.”

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