



NSCB News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jennifer Lewis
Public Information Officer
(702) 486-1111

Scott Smith
Public Information Specialist
(702) 486-1165

NEVADA, CALIFORNIA FIGHT ILLEGAL CONTRACTORS IN ANNUAL “BORDER BLITZ” OPERATION

ZEPHYR COVE, Nev. – Combining efforts and resources to combat unlicensed contractors, investigators from the Nevada State Contractors Board and California Contractors State License Board conducted a joint “Border Blitz” sting near Lake Tahoe. The Nevada sting in Zephyr Cove on May 17 cited 6 alleged unlicensed individuals; California’s undercover operation in South Lake Tahoe on May 16 nabbed 10 suspects, including seven who live in Nevada.

“These joint sting operations demonstrate Nevada’s and California’s shared commitment to protecting homeowners from unlicensed individuals,” NSCB Executive Officer Margi Grein said. “Unlicensed contractors pose a continued and significant threat to homeowners statewide when work is not completed or substandard, or if they should get injured on the job; Property owners are stripped of the protections and recourses available via the Board’s full authority and resources when they hire unlicensed contractors.”

Suspects were cited for advertising without a license, a violation of Nevada Revised Statute 624.720 or – if they delivered a written estimate during the encounter at the sting house – for violating NRS 624.700, contracting without a license. In Nevada, licenses are required for any work that exceeds \$1000 in labor and material, requires a building permit, or changes the aesthetic appeal or structural and mechanical components of a building or property grounds.

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Four unlicensed workers came to the Zephyr Cove home to offer painting services. Rigoberto Gonzalez (\$16,900) and Javier Tinoco (\$9,875) both of Incline Village, presented bids well in excess of Nevada's \$1,000 threshold. They were ticketed for contracting without a license. Elmer Vazquez of Sparks, doing business as KAJ Painting, did not offer a bid at the sting house, but later submitted a text offer of \$14,715. He was cited for contracting without a license and illegal advertising. Steven Rose of Carson City did not offer a bid and was cited for advertising without a license.

Gershon BenChaim did not appear at the sting house, but later provided a bid for a garage door. He was cited for contracting without a license and illegal advertising.

Carson City's Alberto Ruiz, who was scheduled to visit Nevada's sting house on Thursday, instead appeared at California's sting on Wednesday, where he received citations from both states.

Those cited must appear in court to answer the charges:

SUSPECT, RESIDENCE	WORK CLASS	ALLEGED VIOLATIONS
Alberto Ruiz-Lopez, Carson City	Multiple	Advertising without a license
Rigoberto Gonzalez, Incline Village	Painting	Contracting without a license
Javier Tinoco, Incline Village	Painting	Contracting without a license
Elmer Vazquez/KAJ Painting, Sparks	Painting	Contracting without a License Advertising without a license
Steven Rose/Rose Painting, Carson City	Painting	Advertising without a license
Gershon BenChaim, Reno/Sparks	Garage Door	Contracting without a License Advertising without a license

In California, projects valued at \$500 or more must be conducted by companies or people with state-issued licenses. Unlicensed individuals can advertise for jobs for less than \$500, but must note in the advertisement that they are not licensed. All seven Nevada suspects caught in the California sting were ticketed for contracting without a license and at least one other offense:

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- Andrew Davis, Carson City (illegal advertising)
- Symon Sears, Carson City (illegal advertising)
- Eduardo Martinez-Medina, Sparks (illegal advertising)
- Carlos Romero, Sun Valley (illegal advertising)
- Frank Euronis, Reno (failure to carry workers compensation insurance)
- Alberto Ruiz-Lopes (illegal advertising, illegally large down payment, no workers comp)
- Leo Pasquarello, Sparks (illegal advertising, illegally large down payment)

“Enforcement operations like this are just one way our two Boards work closely together throughout the year,” said CSLB Registrar David R. Fogt. “Our staffs are constantly talking, working investigations together, and passing along information to each other regarding suspected criminals moving back and forth between California and Nevada.”

The Contractors Board urges anyone who comes across unlicensed contracting activities to report the information to **NSCB’s Unlicensed Contractor Hotline: (702) 486-1160 or (775) 850-7838.**

Disclaimer – Suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law.

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