



# NSCB News Release



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## **CONTRACTORS BOARD OPENS 70 INVESTIGATIONS INTO UNLICENSED ACTIVITIES IN JUNE AS PART OF NATIONAL EFFORT**

**LAS VEGAS and RENO, Nev.** – As part of a month-long crackdown on unlicensed construction activity, the Nevada State Contractors Board’s Special Investigations Unit opened a total of 70 investigations, resulting in the issuance of 20 criminal citations, 16 Cease and Desist Orders, one administrative citation, and submission of 11 cases to county district attorneys’ offices. Citations and/or criminal proceedings are pending in several additional cases.

During the month, in addition to investigating complaints from the public, Board investigators conducted undercover sting operations in southern and northern Nevada and performed neighborhood sweeps for people engaged in home repair and other construction projects without proper licensure.

The concentrated effort in Nevada was part of a nationwide effort to curtail illegal contracting and highlight the financial and public safety threats it presents. Coordinated by the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies (NASCLA), contractors boards in Arizona, California, Florida, Mississippi, Oregon, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah and Washington, also scheduled stings and proactive enforcement activities to identify and prosecute suspected unlicensed contractors. Details of all states’ efforts can be found on NASCLA’s website: <https://www.nascla.org/blogpost/1535522/Press-Releases>.

“We value opportunities to join states across the nation in expressing the importance of verifying contractors’ license credentials before hiring them because it brings our message one step closer to protecting the next homeowner from becoming harmed,” NSCB Executive Officer Margi A. Grein said. “Public protection is the cornerstone of our agency and we take seriously our responsibility to empower the public with tools and information to keep them safe.”

(more)

In Nevada, unlicensed contractor sting operations are an opportunity for Board investigators to pose as home and business owners in an effort to solicit bids from unlicensed contractors who have advertised services often requiring a contractor's license on online bulletin boards, social media, and other locations. Bids received from unlicensed individuals in excess of \$1,000, including labor and material, or for work that requires a contractor's license or building permit are illegal. Upon receipt of an illegal bid, Board investigators disclose their affiliation, issue a criminal citation in most cases, and encourage the unlicensed individual to obtain their contractor's license, which may result in a lesser penalty.

Nevada law requires any electrical, plumbing, heating or air conditioning work to be performed by a properly licensed Nevada contractor, as these are trades that can have significant life safety impacts on the public.

“Every day we learn of homeowners who have suffered significant loss, hardship or damage to their homes after placing their trust in unlicensed contractors who took advantage of them,” Grein said. “While we prosecute unlicensed contractors to the fullest extent of the law, hiring them deprives homeowners of many of the Contractors Board's protections and makes them vulnerable to fraud and poor workmanship.”

Nevada's Residential Recovery Fund is available to owners of single-family residences only if they hire licensed contractors. The fund allows an owner who is damaged by a licensed contractor up to four years from the date work is performed to submit a claim. The fund may award up to \$35,000 for repairs.

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**. Details to provide the Board, when available, include the unlicensed contractor's name, address (business and/or physical location where work is being performed), phone number, vehicle description, license plate, business card and/or advertisement, contracts signed by the unlicensed person, etc.

**Disclaimer – All alleged suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law.**

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