



NSCB News Release



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SERIAL UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR SENTENCED

RENO, Nev. – A member of the Nevada State Contractors Board’s “10 Most Wanted” list of unlicensed contractors has been sentenced to at least 6 ½ years in jail for crimes against northern Nevada residents.

Lucas Hunter Schopper learned his fate at a sentencing hearing in the Second Judicial Court in Reno on January 16. Judge David Hardy ordered Schopper to spend 79 to 198 months in custody and pay court costs, fees, penalties, \$3,282 in investigative costs to the Nevada State Contractors Board and restitution to his victims.

He pleaded guilty in October to three felony charges: forgery, theft and crimes against a person over the age of 60. He had been free after posting bail following his arrests in February and September 2018, prompting the Contractors Board to issue a “Consumer Alert” to northern Nevada homeowners.

Schopper, whose contractor’s license for Bella Terra Professional Landscaping Services, was revoked by the Contractors Board in 2009 for abandoning a construction project, failing to comply with the Board’s orders, receiving money and not performing commensurate work, acting beyond the scope of his license, committing a fraudulent or deceitful act, performing work that was not current with industry standards and failure to establish financial responsibility, among other violations. However, he continued to perform remodeling, landscaping, and other home improvement projects that require a valid Nevada license. His criminal record began shortly thereafter; he pleaded guilty to similar charges in 2010, 2012 and 2015.

The current case, based on evidence collected by the Contractors Board, included four cases involving projects with contract values of \$19,750 to \$37,693. Victims, who, had paid Schopper nearly \$60,000, were allowed to present impact statements to the court during the sentencing phase. The Board has four additional cases pending against Schopper.

(more)

Since his license was revoked in 2009, Schopper has made a habit of claiming legitimate contractors' licenses as his own. He would give discounts to people who responded to his flyers and paid before any work was completed.

NSCB is urging anyone who feels they may have been scammed by Schopper to contact the **NSCB Unlicensed Contractor Hotline: (775) 850-7838 as soon as possible.**

The Board encourages anyone looking to have work performed on their home to always verify a contractor's license number on the Board's website or contact the Board directly at (775) 688-1141 before signing a contract. Homeowners who hire licensed contractors receive the Board's full protections should something go wrong during the course of a project, and may be eligible for the Board's Residential Recovery Fund, which may award up to \$35,000 in financial recourse to damaged homeowners.

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