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NSCB Investigator's Determination Snags Unlicensed Reno Contractor; Three Unlicensed Contractors Also Cited In Southern Nevada

Luck finally ran out for **Michael R. Tate, dba Mike R. Tate Concrete and T8 Concrete**, when he was recently issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*, after submitting a \$4,900 concrete bid to a NSCB investigator.

The NSCB had pursued Tate for more than a year. His recent advertisement on Craigslist stating that he would do work "anywhere" caught the attention of an investigator, who asked the alleged unlicensed contractor to drive nearly four hours from Tracy, Calif., to Reno. Tate arrived with four workers and a dump truck full of dirt. Three NSCB investigators and two Reno Police officers were on hand to greet the illegal contractors. Besides citing Tate for unlicensed activity, identifications were compiled on his four associates.

The crew was allowed to keep their load of dirt.

"This investigation with law enforcement is a fine example of the commitment both agencies have to protecting the public," said Margi Grein, Executive Officer for the Board.

"The NSCB wants to thank the Reno Police Department for its assistance in this investigation and looks forward to an ongoing cooperative relationship.

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“Unlicensed contractors can cost consumers thousands of dollars,” Grein added. “They carry no insurance, are not bonded and have not met any standards of the trade they may be performing.”

Ron White, dba Complete Home Repair, had placed his business sign alongside the road in Las Vegas. He advertised of being able to do painting, drywalls and texturing, tile and other flooring, plumbing and carpentry. Unfortunately, White isn’t licensed to do any of these jobs. So when he submitted an \$800 bid to a NSCB investigator to paint the exterior of a home and repair stucco, White was issued a criminal citation to appear in Las Vegas Justice Court for *contracting and advertising without a license*.

Joaquin Zamora-Morales was identified as an unlicensed contractor at Broad Acres Swap Meet in North Las Vegas. He allegedly presented a business card with a California contractor’s license number on it to a NSCB investigator, telling the investigator he thought the card was good in Nevada. Zamora- Morales was wrong on two counts. First, he needed a Nevada contractor’s license to do business and second, he couldn’t use another company’s license. After submitting a bid for the installation of granite counter tops, Zamora-Morales was given a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*.

Jose Ascencion Bravo advertised in the Nifty Nickel newspaper that he could do concrete and block-wall work. He recently submitted a \$1,450 bid to a NSCB investigator for the installation of a concrete slab and replacement of a section of a block wall. The unlicensed contractor was quickly issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*.

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Contracting without a license in Nevada is a misdemeanor for the first offense, a gross misdemeanor for the second offense and a Class E felony for the third offense. Homeowners who use unlicensed contractors are not eligible for the Residential Recovery Fund, and by law their contracts are null and void.

The NSCB urges consumers to follow these simple tips when dealing with a contractor:

- **Hire only licensed contractors. Ask to see their NSCB license.**
- **Don't rush into decisions or hire someone without checking out potential contractors.**
- **Be especially wary when approached by someone offering door-to-door home improvements.**
- **Verify the contractor's license by checking online at: www.nscb.state.nv.us or calling: (702) 486-1100 in Southern Nevada, or (775) 688-1141 in Northern Nevada.**
- **Ensure the contractor is properly licensed for the work you want done on your home.**
- **Limit your down payment or deposit to 10 percent of the total contract.**
- **Don't pay cash without obtaining signed receipts, and don't let the payments get ahead of the work.**

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