

News Release

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Sacramento County Undercover Construction Sting Catches Unlicensed Contractors

Contractors State License Board warns consumers about the dangers of hiring unlicensed contractors

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Construction is thriving in Sacramento County and unlicensed contracting is a real threat to consumer safety. A recent [Contractors State License Board](#) (CSLB) sting in the city of Elk Grove found unlicensed activity that included a contractor who provided a \$60,000 bid for a kitchen remodeling project. By law, a contractors license is required in California for construction jobs over \$500.

“Consumers need to protect themselves by hiring a licensed contractor, especially when taking on a project like a remodel that may costs tens of thousands of dollars,” says CSLB Registrar David Fogt. “Just because someone is asking for a lot of money doesn’t mean they have the skills or ability to satisfactorily perform the work.”



The September 21 and 22 enforcement operation was conducted with representatives from the [California Department of Insurance](#) and the [Sacramento County District Attorney's Office](#). The operation focused on the Elk Grove area just east of Interstate 5.

CSLB's Statewide Investigative Fraud Team (SWIFT) members posed as residential homeowners and contacted suspected unlicensed contractors through their advertisements to perform concrete, flooring, landscaping, remodeling and painting work.



Fifteen people were issued Notice to Appear in criminal court citations for unlicensed contracting violations. Three of the unlicensed persons were also cited for requiring excessive down payments.

CSLB-licensed contractors have met experience and testing requirements, carry a license bond, passed a criminal background check and carry workers' compensation insurance for employees.

All suspects were ordered to appear at the [Sacramento County Superior Criminal Courthouse](#), on December 21 and 22, 2021.

Tips for Hiring a Contractor

Hire only California-licensed contractors. Ask to see the license. The number must be on all advertisements, contracts and business cards.

[Check the license](#) number on CSLB's website or by phone at 800-321-CSLB (2752). Confirm the contractor has workers' compensation insurance for employees.

Create a personalized list of licensed, area contractors using the [Find My Licensed Contractor](#).

Get three bids, check references, and get a written contract.

Don't rush into decisions and don't hire the first contractor who comes along.

Don't pay more than 10 percent down or \$1,000—whichever is less.

Don't pay cash, and don't let the payments get ahead of the work. Only pay for work as it is completed to your satisfaction

Keep a job file of all project papers, including correspondence and copies of all payments.

Avoid making the final payment until you're satisfied with the job.

For more information, visit CSLB's [website](#), or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).

Remodeling Licensing Options for Contractors

CSLB recently developed a B-2 Residential Remodeling Classification for contractors. It is available to people working on remodeling and small home improvement projects that don't qualify for a B-General Building License because the contracted work does not include framing or rough carpentry. Learn more about the B-2 license [here](#).

High resolution versions of the photos included in this release are available upon request.

Video Footage: No video of these sweeps is available, however the video clips below are from a January 2020 sting operation in Paradise, California.

One-minute clip here: <https://youtu.be/8Mp1UICfgRE>

Longer version: <https://youtu.be/6JVKVxvHNR0>

About CSLB: *CSLB operates under the umbrella of the Department of Consumer Affairs and licenses and regulates nearly 283,000 contractors in California. In 2020, CSLB helped consumers recover more than \$26 million in ordered restitution.*

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