



NSCB News Release



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BOARD INVESTIGATION INTO UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR NETS FELONY PLEA

HENDERSON, Nev. – An unlicensed contractor and a motorcycle shop manager have agreed to plead guilty to felony theft charges after an extensive investigation conducted by the Nevada State Contractors Board.

“The Nevada State Contractors Board encourages anyone with concerns about construction-related matters to file a complaint with our Board immediately,” expressed NSCB Executive Officer Margi A. Grein. “We investigate all alleged concerns and work to identify possible avenues of recourse for home or business owners who may have been harmed during their interaction with a licensed or unlicensed contractor. We appreciate the action taken by the Clark County District Attorney to hold these unlicensed individuals accountable for their fraudulent and deceptive actions.”

The investigation by NSCB’s Fraud Unit alleges that the unlicensed contractor, Ronen Benkel and shop manager, Eric Jacobsen, conspired to defraud the store of \$300,000 in fake construction invoices. NSCB’s months-long investigation resulted in 27 counts of felony theft. The motorcycle dealer’s parent company became suspicious after Jacobsen wrote a series of checks to Benkel for repair and construction work at the local dealership. Invoices showed high charges for seemingly minor projects over an 18-month period. After internal investigations yielded no results, the company was informed that the NSCB’S Fraud Unit might be able to help and filed a complaint with the Board.

Investigators found that about 40 percent of the payments Benkel received were deposited into Jacobsen’s personal bank account. Benkel, who had fled to Israel, was arrested upon his return. The Clark County District Attorney’s office approved the charges and obtained the plea deal on Nov. 30.

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Conditions dictate the defendants will plead guilty to one count of Class B felony and pay \$300,000 in restitution. Failure to pay back the money could result in prison time. Class B felony theft carries potential prison time of 3 to 10 years.

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