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**Unlicensed Reno Contractor Arrested On Outstanding Warrant;
Five Others Cited For Alleged Unlicensed Activities**

The Reno Police Department recently arrested **Brent D. Deems** of Reno on a misdemeanor warrant for *advertising and contracting* without a license. Deems failed to appear in court on the criminal charges. The arrest occurred when Deems was issued an *unlicensed contracting* criminal citation this month for providing a \$1,425 painting bid to a NSCB investigator. Deems had been advertising his “On the Spot” painting, carpentry, fencing repair and stone work business on a local bulletin board.

Michael M. Sutton was standing on a tall ladder, wiring a T-8 into a lighting fixture, when he recently caught the attention of a NSCB investigator.

When asked why he was doing electrical work without a license, Sutton said, “I am doing it for labor. They wanted it done, and I was the cheapest.”

Most people learn from their mistakes, but not Sutton. One month earlier, he was issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license* and submitting a \$125 bid for electrical work. He was issued a second criminal citation for *contracting without a license*.

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Douglas W. Sohnrey and **Jerome M. Stinson**, both of Reno, turned to Craigslist to advertise their unlicensed businesses. Sohnrey said he had been unemployed since January, when he provided a concrete bid for \$2,275 to a NSCB investigator and was immediately issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*. **Stinson, dba Graphic Design & Creations, LLC.**, said he was an out-of-work graphic designer when he gave a \$1,900 bid to paint a house. Stinson said he was starving and needed the work, but the bid he provided for labor was nearly double what a licensed contractor would normally charge. Stinson was issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*.

Ted E. Kalata, dba Ground Up Repairs, was advertising on a Carson City bulletin board that he had 27 years of construction experience and could do everything from landscaping, to roofing, concrete work, decks and bathroom and kitchen remodeling. He recently provided a \$3,175 bid for concrete work to a NSCB investigator and was issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*.

Robert G. Swan had advertised on a Reno bulletin board that he could do all types of painting and home repairs. Upon providing a \$1,500 bid to a NSCB investigator, he was issued a criminal citation for *contracting without a license*.

“All these stings should serve as warnings that the NSCB is serious about cracking down on unlicensed contractors,” Margi Grein, Executive Officer of the NSCB, said. “Consumers should not be taken in by promises of cheap work performed by unlicensed contractors. In reality it may cost more, and the consumer is left with little or no protection. It is important for consumers to check the license status of any company they wish to hire on our website at: www.nscb.state.nv.us ”

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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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