



NEVADA STATE CONTRACTORS BOARD

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NSCB PARTNERS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT TO ARREST UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR WITH TWO ACTIVE WARRANTS

RENO, NEV. – Unlicensed contractor James Drumstas, owner of Mountain Woodworks LLC, was arrested by Capitol police and the Nevada Highway Patrol on two warrants issued by the Washoe County District Attorney's Office for misdemeanor charges related to contracting without a license and felony charges for obtaining money under false pretenses.

"The Nevada State Contractors Board appreciates the quick action taken by local and state law enforcement officials to apprehend Drumstas at his place of business," expressed Executive Officer David Behar. "Individuals like Mr. Drumstas are the reason we continue to caution consumers against working with unlicensed contractors. He has taken more than \$170,000 from local homeowners without upholding the terms of the contracts agreed to, leaving consumers financially harmed and with few options for recourse."

The Nevada State Contractors Board has opened six investigations into allegations of workmanship, project abandonment, and obtaining money under false pretenses. Drumstas contracted for a variety of carpentry related work, taking large deposits without completing the projects. The complainants in each case are unable to seek recourse through the Board's Residential Recover Fund due to Drumstas status as an unlicensed contractor. Instead, they will await the outcome of prosecution efforts by local District Attorneys who may determine and order restitution.

Consumers who hire licensed contractors have four years from the start of their project to file a complaint with the Nevada State Contractors Board. The Board opens an investigation into the complaint items, and if validated, issues a Notice to Correct; failure to comply may result in disciplinary action against the licensee and eligibility for the consumer to file a claim for recovery of damages up to \$40,000 from the Residential Recovery Fund.

"We know financial constraints can lead consumers to selecting a contractor that best aligns with their budgetary needs," states Director of Investigations Terry Wike. "However, we urge consumers to be vigilant in their efforts to hire only licensed contractors as it is the only path to ensure you receive access to the full investigative and recourse options of the Board when your complaints are validated."

Contractor licenses can be verified on the Board's website at www.nscb.nv.gov, on the NSCB Mobile Application, or by calling one of the Board offices. Consumers will want to ensure the contractor's contact information mirrors what they were provided, that the license is in 'Active' standing, and that the license classification aligns with the work they intend to have performed. Details will also include any disciplinary action against the license, which can be helpful as consumers weigh their options before hiring.

Nevada recently enacted a new law limiting the down payment for any residential home improvement projects to no more than \$1,000 or 10% of the aggregate contract value – a protection the Contractors Board believes will help reduce complaints of project abandonment and excessive payments. Consumers can find helpful resources on the Board's website (www.nscb.nv.gov), including a [Contract Checklist for Home Improvement Projects](#).

The following are examples of predatory tactics often associated with unlawful construction activities:

- Demands for cash payments and large deposits prior to work beginning.
- Unwillingness to provide a written contract.
- Unsolicited home visits with an individual(s) eager to gain access to your home; won't take no for an answer.
- Aggressively pushes "today only" special or has extra materials left over from previous job; can start right away!

Consumers with concerns related to their construction project with a licensed or unlicensed entity are encouraged to file a complaint with the Nevada State Contractors Board. Unlicensed contracting activities can also be reported to the Board by phone or through the Board's mobile application.

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The Nevada State Contractors Board is committed to ensuring the integrity and professionalism of the construction industry in Nevada. The NSCB has the responsibility to promote quality construction by Nevada licensed contractors through a regulatory licensing system designed to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public. For more information about the Nevada State Contractors Board, please visit www.nscb.nv.gov.

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