



ARIZONA REGISTRAR OF CONTRACTORS



Douglas A. Ducey, Governor

Jeff Fleetham, Director

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AZ ROC: Statewide Operation Nets 30 Unlicensed Individuals

PHOENIX, Ariz., (June 30, 2015) – On Mon., June 29, 2015, the Arizona Registrar of Contractors (AZ ROC) concluded a statewide operation targeting unlicensed entities performing contracting work.

The successful operation resulted in the arrest of nine individuals, including two individuals identified on AZ ROC's "Top Most Wanted List." Five more were criminally and civilly cited and in addition to arrests and citations, AZ ROC issued warnings and required compliance of 16 individuals advertising without a license on Craigslist, business cards or private websites. AZ ROC and law enforcement continue investigating several more individuals believed to have been Contracting or Advertising without a License during the operation.



The operation in Arizona served as part of a larger nationwide operation planned in coordination with the National Association of State Contractors Licensing Agencies.

In Arizona, AZ ROC and law enforcement employed use of vacant houses, targeted sweeps and proactive operations in an attempt to curb unlicensed activity in Arizona. The nearly two week, carefully planned operation was planned and executed by AZ ROC investigators who were working with local law enforcement agencies in Cochise, Maricopa (Phoenix Police Department), Pima, and Yuma (Sheriff's Office and Police Department) counties. The arrest operations targeted repeat offenders contracting without a license, who also possessed outstanding warrants.

In **Cochise County**, a successful operation was conducted in the Sierra Vista-area and charges are likely pending on three violators, though it is too early in the investigation to release those

identities. The Cochise County Sheriff's Office and the Huachuca City Police Department are assisting AZ ROC with these investigations.

In **Maricopa County**, working with the City of Phoenix Police Department, an operation was established at a designated, vacant house in the 3600 block of N. 45th Pl. in Phoenix on Tues., June 23, 2015 and resulted in the arrest of three men. The three men possessed outstanding warrants, were arrested and transported to Maricopa County Jail.

- Derek Garcia, 22 of Goodyear, met with undercover agents at the house, provided an estimate of \$4,800 to perform landscaping work without a license and possessed a Class 3 Felony Warrant.
- Gregory Link, 46 of Mesa, arrived at the house, provided an estimate of \$1,875 to install tile within the home and possessed one Felony Warrant and four active Misdemeanor Warrants, one of which was for Contracting without a License.
- Charles Rattigan, 49 of Gilbert, toured the house, provided an estimate of \$2,000 to paint the interior of the home and possessed three Misdemeanor Warrants, one of which was for Contracting without a License.

Also in **Maricopa County**, AZ ROC again worked with Phoenix PD and Surprise PD to arrest two of the Top Most Wanted by AZ ROC – Ismael Romero and John Parks.

On Thurs., June 18, 2015 at approximately 1:24 AM, Ismael Romero, 50 of Waddell, was arrested by Surprise Police Department after being found to have four outstanding Warrants, including engaging in Contracting without a License, for a total bond of \$17,200. Romero was transported to Maricopa County Fourth Avenue Jail, where he was booked without incident, and was still in custody as of Fri., June 26, 2015. AZ ROC wanted Romero for Contracting and Advertising without a License as he performs poor work, is known to take money and abandon a job without work being done and has a history of nine prior complaints with the ROC.

On Thurs., June 25, 2015, John Parks, 25 of Gilbert, was arrested after meeting with his Probation Officer. On Mon., June 29, 2015, he was indicted for Fraudulent Schemes, Theft and Contracting without a License by the Arizona Attorney General's Office. He is being held at the Maricopa County Jail on a \$10,000 bond and a hold due to a probation violation. The charges were filed following a three month investigation into Parks' alleged scamming of an 86-year-old woman out of \$26,000 over several months as he was purportedly making minor repairs to her roof. To note, the estimated cost to replace the woman's entire roof is \$4,000. Parks was found in possession of heroin at the time of his arrest on June 25.

In **Pima County**, Directed Patrol with the Pima County Sheriff's Department arrested three individuals.

- Kevin Bennett, 47 of Tucson, was arrested on Thurs., June 18, 2015 for Disorderly Conduct and AZ ROC Warrant for Failure to Appear.
- Michael Gail, 35 of Tucson, was arrested on Sat., June 20, 2015 for a Warrant on Contracting without a License.
- Guadalupe Lopez, 47 of Tucson, was arrested on Tues., June 23, 2015 for a Warrant on Contracting without a License.

In **Yuma County**, working with the Yuma County Sheriff's Office and City of Yuma Police Department, an operation was established at designated, vacant houses in the 8700 block of S. Avenue "D," 11000 block of S. Paula Avenue and 2200 block of E. 27th Ln. and resulted in the issuances of criminal and civil citations of five men and arrest of one man.

- Francisco Avalos, 42 of Yuma, was identified as a target of the operation, located and arrested by the Yuma Police Department for Failure to Appear Warrant related to previously Contracting without a License.
- The other five men – Thomas Lujan, Fernando Marquez, Adolfo Ramos, Lance Savard, and Abraham Sevilla – arrived at one of the three house locations and provided estimates for work ranging from \$1,500 to \$26,000 for pool decks, cabinets and even a detached building. Each individual was cited for Contracting without a License.

Director of the Arizona Registrar of Contractors Jeff Fleetham stated, “Individuals and entities performing contracting work illegally and without a license place the public at risk and effectively steal millions from Arizona’s hardworking, law-abiding contractors and their employees. AZ ROC proudly participates in this annual, nationwide operation and I thank each of our law enforcement partners, who everyday assist our investigators in curbing unlicensed activity throughout Arizona.”

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