



February 4, 2010

**MADIGAN SUES WASHINGTON COUNTY CONTRACTOR FOR FAILURE TO
FULFILL HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTS**

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a lawsuit in Washington County Circuit Court alleging that a local home repair contractor solicited contracts and collected fees for work that the contractor failed to perform or completed in a substandard manner.

Madigan's suit alleges that Everett and Myra Henson, who operate Henson Construction, Pole Barns & More and Do-It-Rite Home Improvement, entered into contracts for home remodeling services and accepted consumers' down payments but then either failed to complete the work or performed the work in a substandard manner. The Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Bureau has received five complaints about the defendants' work from consumers in Franklin, Jackson and Washington counties.

"Prosecuting home repair fraud cases and raising consumer awareness of the potential for this kind of fraud is a high priority for my office. Every year, complaints about home repair fraud are among the largest number of consumer complaints that we receive," Madigan said. "I can't stress enough that consumers need to ask the right questions and check references before hiring a contractor to perform work on their homes. I also encourage consumers to use my office and the Better Business Bureau as resources when doing research in advance of entering into a home repair contract."

Madigan's lawsuit alleges that the defendants violated the Illinois Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act and the Illinois Home Repair and Remodeling Act by performing work in a shoddy, unprofessional manner, failing to complete the repair work, and refusing to provide refunds to consumers. The complaint also alleges that the defendants failed to provide homeowners with written contracts and the "Home Repair: Know Your Consumer Rights" pamphlet, as required under Illinois law.

In the suit, Madigan asks the court to prohibit the defendants from engaging in the home repair trade in Illinois. Madigan's suit also seeks to have the defendants pay restitution for consumers, a civil penalty of \$50,000, additional penalties of \$50,000 for each violation found to have been committed with the intent to defraud, as well as \$10,000 per violation found to have been committed against a senior 65 years or older. The lawsuit also asks the court to require the defendants to pay the costs of the investigation and prosecution of the case.

Assistant Attorney General Jeff Feltman is handling the case for Madigan's Consumer Fraud Bureau.

Consumers who believe they have been the victim of a home repair scam or any other consumer fraud can download a complaint form at www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov/consumers or call the Attorney General's Consumer Fraud Hotline at one of the following numbers:

Chicago 1-800-386-5438

Springfield 1-800-243-0618

Carbondale 1-800-243-0607

Spanish-language Hotline: 1-866-310-8398

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