



May 21, 2014

MADIGAN LAUNCHES MULTI-COUNTY CRACKDOWN ON HOME REPAIR SCAMS

Lawsuits in Cook, DuPage, Logan & Vermilion Counties Highlight Need for Legislation for Statewide Home Repair and Construction Task Force to Confront Illegal Operators

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today filed a series of lawsuits against home repair contractors for scamming homeowners out of thousands of dollars for work that was never completed.

Madigan filed six lawsuits in Cook, DuPage, Logan and Vermilion County Circuit Courts, alleging contractors repeatedly took money upfront from homeowners without completing the work, leaving some people scrambling to complete repairs in the wake of severe storms that recently have hit Illinois.

The lawsuits are Madigan's latest enforcement actions to combat unscrupulous contractors and serve to highlight the need for passage of House Bill 5735, the Home Repair and Construction Task Force Act, which would establish an exploratory committee to assess whether Illinois home repair and construction contractors should face additional regulatory requirements to do business in the state.

"Time and again, we receive complaints from people who have been ripped off by home repair contractors who take homeowners' money but never follow through on the work, especially in communities devastated by severe storms," Attorney General Madigan said. "We will continue to bring enforcement actions to recover money for homeowners and put these unscrupulous contractors out of business, but it is also time to consider additional ways to prevent these contractors from operating in Illinois in the first place."

Madigan filed three lawsuits in Cook County Circuit Court, and one lawsuit each in DuPage, Logan and Vermilion County Circuit Courts against the following contractors:

- **ConCasa Renovations Inc., Addison:** ConCasa conducts door-to-door solicitations for home and roof repair services for residents whose homes have been damaged by severe weather and offers to act as a homeowner's public adjuster to negotiate with their insurance company. Madigan's lawsuit alleges the company instructed people to sign over their insurance checks under the promise the work will be completed. The suit alleges the company usually fails to even begin the work and stops returning calls when homeowners demand refunds. Cook County homeowners are owed more than \$23,000 for unfinished work.
- **Construction Logisticts Inc., River Grove:** Construction Logisticts offer plumbing, roofing and electrical work without being licensed. The lawsuit alleges that after contracting work, the company presented residents with new costs due to unanticipated complications. The company repeatedly failed to complete home repair work and failed to refund Cook County homeowners more than \$44,800 in upfront costs for contracts.
- **Rogers Roofing and Construction Inc., McHenry:** Rogers operates door-to-door, soliciting its services without a roofing license. The lawsuit alleges the company performed shoddy work or in many cases, no work at all. Cook and DuPage county residents who wrote checks based on estimates from their insurance companies were denied refunds for more than \$33,000.
- **Streamline Professional Landscaping Design Services, Buffalo Grove:** Streamline operates as an unlicensed contractor for design, repair, remodeling, construction and installation of home landscaping projects. Residents from across northern Illinois, including Boone, DuPage, Kane, Lake, Will and Winnebago counties, reported that the company often failed to perform any work after the consumers paid over \$57,000 in upfront fees.
- **Teddy's Paving & Mid-State Tar & Chip, Vermilion and Coles counties:** Teddy Girton operates the two companies, soliciting door-to-door for driveway paving and repair work. Consumers who contracted with Girton reported shoddy work.

The lawsuit alleges Girton falsely represented that his operation was legal and the work was guaranteed for up to five years. Homeowners in Coles and Vermilion counties paid more than \$77,000 for work that was shoddy or never completed.

- **Marten Construction, Logan County:** Damon Marten operates the company using a P.O. Box address, soliciting homeowners for repair work. Consumers paid over \$146,000 for work on their homes that was shoddy or never completed. Residents in Logan and Menard counties reported that Marten failed to show up to their homes for days at a time and refused to provide refunds of unearned payments.

Madigan offered these tips to residents and businesses from being targeted by dishonest home repair contractors:

- Be wary of contractors who go door to door to offer repair services. Ask for recommendations from people you know and trust and, whenever possible, use established local contractors.
- Call the Attorney General's [Consumer Fraud Hotline](#) and the Better Business Bureau to check out a contractor and to learn if any complaints have been filed against a particular business.
- Even if there is a need to act quickly, shop around for the best deal. Get written estimates from multiple contractors, and don't be rushed into a deal.
- Get all of the terms of a contract in writing, and obtain a copy of the signed contract.
- Never make full payment until all the work has been completed to your satisfaction.
- Never pay in cash.
- Be aware that you have the right to cancel a contract within three business days if you signed it based on the contractor's visit to your home.
- In the case of disaster repair, you have an additional right to cancel. If your insurance carrier denies coverage, you have the right to cancel the contract within five days of when your insurance carrier denies your coverage.

Madigan also reminded consumers that the Illinois Home Repair and Remodeling Act requires contractors to furnish customers with written contracts for any repair or remodeling work costing more than \$1,000. A contract must be signed by both the customer and the contractor. The law also requires contractors to carry at least minimum amounts of insurance for property damage, bodily injury and improper home repair. Contractors also must provide consumers with an informational pamphlet entitled "[Home Repair: Know Your Consumer Rights](#)."

Madigan urged Illinois residents who think they have been scammed by a home repair contractor to contact her Consumer Fraud Bureau hotlines to file a complaint:

1 (800) 386-5438 Chicago
1 (800) 243-0618 Springfield
1 (800) 243-0607 Carbondale

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