



**Oregon Construction Contractors Board**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

DATE: July 19, 2007 (07-08)  
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**Washington man arrested for theft aimed at the elderly**

On July 18, 2007, Jeffrey Douglas Woodhouse, age 34, of Vancouver, Washington, was arrested by the Oregon State Police at the offices of the Construction Contractors Board (CCB) on warrants stemming from a joint investigation by Florence Police Department and the CCB Enforcement Section's Special Investigations Unit.

Woodhouse was arrested on Theft II charges and working as an unlicensed contractor for allegedly taking a deposit from a 78-year old Florence woman for a garage door installation and not doing the work.

Woodhouse is also suspected of taking construction deposits from other elderly homeowners and not doing work in Warrenton, Eugene, Reedsport and Albany. The CCB has referred the cases to the respective police departments and the Oregon Department of Justice.

"Older adults are often targets because they tend to be more trusting," says Gina Fox, CCB's Public Information Officer.

**Protect Yourself From Construction Fraud**

Every year, unscrupulous individuals pretending to be contractors, make their way city-to-city, through neighborhoods and manufactured home parks, looking for victims, mostly the elderly. Sometimes, they offer to pave your driveway, repair your roof, paint your house, or some other improvement with supplies left over from another job.

This is a scam. If they do any work, it is completed very quickly, the quality of the work is poor and the repairs usually cost more to fix than the original estimate.

Sometimes they just take the money and never return.

Scam artists working a home improvement scheme typically will be driving a commercial van or pick up truck, often with out of state license plates--but not always. They will stop to talk to the “target” that is working in their yard. The scam artist will offer to coat the driveway, spray sealant on the roof, fix porches or chimneys, or anything else they think you might believe.

Often, after the work is done, the scam artist asks for more than the quoted price and may threaten or use intimidation if the higher price is not paid. To make matters worse, the materials used are often inferior. The roof coating may be whitewash and the driveway coating motor oil.

The CCB offers Oregon homeowners the following tips to prevent getting scammed:

- Always check the contractor’s license. Anyone who is paid to repair, improve or build a home must be licensed by the CCB. Consumers can verify a contractor’s license by calling 503-378-4621 or visiting [www.hirelicensedcontractor.com](http://www.hirelicensedcontractor.com) or [www.oregon.gov/CCB](http://www.oregon.gov/CCB) .
- Don’t be pressured into making an on-the-spot decision. If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Never pay the full amount up front.
- If you’re convinced you need the work, take the time to get estimates from more than one contractor.

Anyone who believes they have been a victim of construction fraud should contact the CCB’s Enforcement Section at 503-378-4621.

The CCB is a state agency licensing more than 44,000 contractors. For tips and information on having successful home improvements or repairs, visit [www.hirelicensedcontractor.com](http://www.hirelicensedcontractor.com).

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