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***** Consumer Alert! *****

**Mesquite Homeowners Are Being Advised To Beware
Of Unlicensed Contractors Offering Flood-Repair Assistance;
Flood Warnings Also Issued For Las Vegas Valley**

The Nevada State Contractors Board is advising homeowners in Mesquite and the Las Vegas Valley to beware of scam artists who offer home repairs, following flooding in the town of Mesquite, surrounding vicinities and flood warning areas in the Las Vegas Valley.

Unlicensed contractors usually target areas after a natural disaster to solicit homeowners with bargain repair prices. Historically, their work is substandard and will deteriorate rapidly.

Beware of unlicensed contractors offering emergency repairs, especially if they use high-pressure tactics to accept their offers. Many times these unlicensed contractors ask for cash payments up front, or before completing the work. Their written contracts are either non-existent, or generally written with no details of the work to be completed.

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These unlicensed contractors do not have bonds, liability insurance, and their workers are not covered by Workman's Compensation benefits. If an unlicensed contractor or his employees are injured on your property, you may be liable for the injuries.

It is important to verify that a contractor is *licensed* by the Nevada State Contractors Board before giving any money, or authorization for rain or flood-damage repairs.

Unlicensed contractors should take notice that NSCB criminal investigators will be in flood areas checking for unlicensed activity and to assist homeowners.

Any contractor who performs residential or commercial remodeling or repairs must have a valid Nevada State Contractors Board license and display it on his contract or invoice and must provide his pocket licensed contractor ID card, if requested by the homeowner.

Mesquite and Las Vegas Valley homeowners may contact the NSCB at: (702) 486-1100, Ext. 1144 or call the unlicensed contractor Hotline at: (702) 486-1160 to see if a contractor being considered is licensed and in good standing, or visit the Board website at: www.nscb.state.nv.us

Remember to always:

- Hire *only* licensed contractors.
- Check the contractor's license number by calling the Nevada State Contractors Board at (702) 486-1100 in Southern Nevada, or (775) 688-1141 in Northern Nevada.

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- Get three references and review past work.
- Get at least three bids.
- Get a written contract and do not sign anything until you completely understand the terms.
- Pay 10 percent down or \$1,000, whichever is less, if a deposit is required.
- Don't let payments get ahead of the work. Keep a record of all payments.
- Don't make a final payment until you are satisfied with the job.
- Don't pay cash.
- Keep a job file of all papers relating to your project.

“Unlicensed contractors can cost consumers thousands of dollars,” said Margi Grein, Executive Officer of the Nevada State Contractors Board. “Consumers should be aware that the Nevada State Contractors Board cannot offer any assistance, if their unsatisfactory work is performed by an unlicensed contractor. Homeowners need to be careful before inviting a contractor into their home. Always check out their license first.”

Contacting without a license in Nevada is a misdemeanor for the first offense, a gross misdemeanor for the second offense and a Class E felony for the third offense.

Homeowners should not use unlicensed contractors because their work is generally poor quality. Homeowners who use unlicensed contractors are not eligible for the Residential Recovery Fund, and by law their contracts are null and void.

For more information, go to the NSCB website at: www.nscb.state.nv.us or call: (702) 486-1100 in Southern Nevada.

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