



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Conserving the Peace Through Values Driven Service
Sheriff Pat Garrett

PRESS RELEASE

Case#50-151870738

Detectives Search for Additional Victims of Contractor Fraud

October 30, 2015--Washington County Property Crime Unit Detectives are searching for additional financial fraud victims, mostly through contractor fraud, following the arrest of a Vancouver man.

Detectives believe that Howard Johnson, 51, from Vancouver (Photo Inset), has financially exploited numerous people posing as a licensed contractor and either not completing the work or doing inferior quality work.

Sheriff's Deputies investigated a complaint from a victim that hired Mr. Johnson to complete home repairs in June 2015. They reported that over the course of about a month, Mr. Johnson would continually ask for money for materials to complete the home repairs. Other than minor brush cutting, no work was ever done on their home in the community of Aloha.

Washington County Sheriff's Property Crime Unit Detectives began working on the case with only the name of the suspect. Detectives discovered that Mr. Johnson swindled about \$11,000 from the victim. During this time, Mr. Johnson also took the victim's 1990 Ford pickup and their 2006 Kymco ATV with the promise to repair them. The victim gave Mr. Johnson additional money to repair the vehicles. Detectives discovered Mr. Johnson gave the truck to someone he owed money to and sold the ATV on the internet to an unknown person.



Detectives were able to locate the Ford pickup and the Kymco ATV and return them to the victim. The cash has not been recovered and is presumed expended.

Earlier this month, a Washington County Grand Jury indicted Howard Johnson and a warrant for his arrest was issued. He is charged with:

- First Degree Aggravated Theft (Victim over 65)
- Two counts of Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle
- Two counts of Possession of a Stolen Motor Vehicle
- Four additional counts of Felony Theft
- Performing Work Without a Contractor's License

Today, Mr. Johnson was arrested by the Clark County Sheriff's Office and lodged in their jail. He is held on \$40,000 bail.

The Washington County Property Crimes Unit Detectives believe there may be additional victims of unreported crimes committed by Mr. Johnson. If you or someone you know has been a victim of Howard Johnson, please call the Washington County Sheriff's Office Detective Division at (503) 846-2500.

The Oregon Construction Contractors Board (CCB) advises consumers to protect yourself when selecting a contractor and provides the following best practices:

- Check with the CCB to make sure anyone you might hire is licensed. Call 503-378-4621 to verify information and ask about any complaint history.
- Never agree to buy services on the spot. Always get a few more bids from other contractors before making a decision.
- Always get a written contract that includes a detailed description of the work, materials, costs, start and end dates.
- Never pay the full amount up front and don't pay in cash. Write your check to the business name that you have contracted with to do the repair or project.