



PRESS RELEASE

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FIVE MEN INDICTED IN OPERATION 'STEAMROLLER' THAT TARGETED SENIOR CITIZENS IN HOME REPAIR SCAM

Colorado Attorney General and Boulder District Attorney's Offices Partner to Prosecute

DENVER — [Colorado Attorney General John Suthers](#) and [Boulder District Attorney Stan Garnett](#) today announced the dismantling of an asphalt paving and roofing ring that targeted and scammed Colorado senior citizens. In a 66-count statewide grand jury indictment Rickey Gene Fite (D.O.B. 02/19/85), his father Rickey Dean Fite (D.O.B. 12/18/58), Rodney Jackson (D.O.B. 04/20/60), Michael Sullivan (D.O.B. 12/09/57) and Emanuel Broadway (D.O.B. 05/17/59) are accused of traveling throughout Colorado and the Western United States representing they were members and operators of a home contractor businesses. Instead, they ran a “fly-by-night” operation that methodically and systematically defrauded and stole from seniors. In some instances, Ricky Gene Fite intimidated and used violent tactics.

The ring operated in more rural areas and neighborhoods of Arapahoe, Boulder, Delta, Jefferson, Larimer, Mesa, Montrose, Ouray and Weld counties and made unsolicited contact with a homeowner. After claiming they had excess asphalt (or roofing material) left over from a nearby job, the men offered the homeowner a “great deal.” If a price was even quoted, it was low and enticing, however, sometimes work began without homeowners’ permission. Always though, the final price was hugely inflated in relation to the nature of the work done.

“One man paid in excess of \$24,000 for egregiously substandard work. In another instance, a 94-year old woman was swindled out of \$8,300 for work that was structurally terrible and worth no more than \$1,521,” said Suthers. “Evidence was developed alleging that when confronted, these men often became abusive and in one instance, Rickey Gene Fite caused pain and injury to an older gentleman after knocking him to the ground with his truck.”

“Protection of seniors from those who commit fraud and prey upon them financially has always been a priority for my office,” said Garnett. “This case involves allegations of

particularly predatory behavior. I appreciate the assistance the Attorney General's Office and the Boulder Sheriff's Office has provided in investigating this case and we look forward to continuing to work with them as we prosecute this matter in Boulder County."

Detectives and a crime analyst with the [Boulder County Sheriff's Office](#) played an instrumental role in identifying the scheme and pattern that linked these individual cases together allowing for the prosecution under the Colorado Organized Crime Control Act (COCCA) and other statutes.

This is the first case the Attorney General's Office is prosecuting under the state's recently-enacted [Elder Abuse law](#). Colorado seniors are legally considered to be at-risk adults and victimizing them now carries appropriately tough penalties. In addition to the COCCA charges, the indictment charges the five men with a range of crimes including money laundering, felony theft, Criminal Attempt to Commit Criminal Exploitation of an At-Risk Elder and tax evasion. If convicted of either of the COCCA counts, all five defendants could face an incarceration sentence of up to 24 years followed by five years of mandatory parole.

Ricky Gene Fite is currently in the Boulder County Jail while Ricky Dean Fite and Rodney Jackson are in law enforcement custody in Arnett, Oklahoma. The public is asked to call 911 and report any information on the whereabouts of Michael Sullivan and Emanuel Broadway.

To stay protected from this type of fraud, homeowners should:

- Never allow an uninvited contractor into your home to "look around" or make an "inspection."
- Never get pressured into making an immediate decision whether to hire a contractor to do any work on your home.
- Before spending any significant amount of money on home repairs (say, in excess of \$500), obtain bids from at least three different contractors.
- Before selecting a final contractor, check their complaint and business history with your local Better Business Bureau.
- Demand a written contract that spells out when the work will be started, the quality and type of all materials to be used, and when the work will be completed. Insist on making partial payments under the contract as specific work is completed to your satisfaction.
- Require your contractor to obtain mechanic's lien waivers from all suppliers and subcontractors.

The filing of criminal charges or an indictment is merely a formal accusation that an individual committed a crime. Each defendant should be presumed innocent until proven guilty. These cases will be prosecuted in Boulder District Court by attorneys with the Colorado Attorney General's Office and the Boulder District Attorney's Office.

Anyone with additional information about this ring is encouraged to contact the Boulder District Attorney's Office by calling 303-441-3700.

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