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May 28, 2021

MEDIA ADVISORY **BE ON ALERT FOR DRIVEWAY REPAIR SCAM THIS SUMMER**

[Salt Lake City] — Warmer temperatures bring many Utahns outdoors for home improvement projects. The Utah Department of Commerce warns that higher temperatures also lead to an increase in a perennial scam: the “Leftover Materials Driveway Repair” scam.

“It’s not new. It happens every year. We can set our watches to it. But every year, someone new falls into the trap,” said Margaret W. Busse. “The good news: Once people know about of the scam, they never fall for it. So we want to raise public awareness.”

The Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing (DOPL) know the “Leftover Materials Driveway Repair” con all too well. Here’s how it generally works:

- Someone approaches you with an offer to do an asphalt job at well-below market rates. “We have leftovers from another job,” they explain.
- Sometimes, they ask for a lump sum payment up front, then disappear without completing any work.
- Other times, they will perform the work with substandard materials and poor quality workmanship.
- The scammer will then inflate the price of their work and threaten to place a lien on the homeowner’s property if they refuse to be extorted.
- In either case, the scammer demands a check, cashes it, and cannot be reached by the homeowner.

“While governments and private companies can work to protect homeowners from scams and substandard work, in the end, the most important protection is an informed and diligent consumer,” said Mark Steinagel, the Director of DOPL. He has a few tips to stop this scam cold:

1. Materials are in short supply for construction right now. “Leftovers” are rare. And those leftovers are not cheap.

2. Check that the contractor is licensed before hiring them by visiting dopl.utah.gov and clicking on "Verify a License".
3. Research the contractor online. Find reviews or examples of their work.
4. Get it in writing. Ask for a contract with the price of the job included and wording that states the homeowner must approve the results of the work before payment is made.

If a homeowner experiences this scam, they are encouraged to report it to DOPL. Head to DOPL.utah.gov and click on "File a Complaint".

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