



Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Jeff Wiley

February 7, 2017

Baton Rouge contractor arrested for fraud in connection with flood

A Baton Rouge man was arrested on Wednesday morning, February 8, for contractor fraud in connection with the August 2016 flood damage repairs, according to Sheriff Jeff Wiley.

Matthew Morris, 39, owner of Complete Construction Contractors, LLC, was arrested at his Baton Rouge office early Wednesday morning.

Beginning in December 2016, deputies began receiving complaints regarding possible contractor fraud as a result of the 2016 flood that occurred in August. To date, 13 victims have filed criminal reports against Morris, said Sheriff Wiley.

Victims reported that they signed a contract for repairs that included three phases: demolition, drying and remediation, and rebuilding. Victims reported to deputies that they never received estimates after repeated requests until after the demolition phase was complete. It was then that victims began receiving invoices that were grossly inflated and totaled over two-thirds of their total insurance payout, which left a shortage of funds to complete the projects.

Once the contracts were terminated, the victims were then billed thousands of dollars for “claims assistance” fees, in addition to 50 percent of the total estimate of the job. Sheriff Wiley added that liens were filed on some of the victim’s residence.

As the investigation continued, it was learned that victims were not only charged at rates that grossly exceeded what other contractors were charging, but they were charged for work that had not been completed. Victims were billed for the treatment of mold and Complete Construction Contractors LLC did not possess a valid mold license. Additionally, these inflated and fraudulent estimates were submitted for payment to various insurance companies.

Matthew Morris, 39, of 21313 Turkey Creek Drive, Baton Rouge, was arrested and charged with 12 counts of residential contractor fraud, nine counts of misapplication of payments, six counts of theft of assets of aged persons, filing or maintaining false public records, 12 counts of prohibited activities and sanctions, and 11 counts of engaging in business of contracting without authority prohibited.

He was booked into the Ascension Parish Jail where he bonded out early Friday morning on a \$635, 000 bond set by Judge LeBlanc.