



Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Jeff Wiley

March 6, 2017

Additional charges added to Baton Rouge contractor on fraud charges in connection with 2016 flood

Matthew Morris, 39, owner of Complete Construction Contractors, LLC, was arrested again on Monday, March 6 in connection with the August 2016 flood damage repairs.

Morris was charged with two additional counts of residential contractor fraud, theft of assets of aged persons, two counts of prohibited activities and sanctions, two counts engaging in business of contracting without authority prohibited, nine counts of filing or maintaining false public records, and six counts of misapplication of payments.

Supplementary charges were filed after detectives received additional complaints on Morris, said Sheriff Jeff Wiley.

After Morris was arrested on February 8, he submitted a cash bond in the amount of \$63,500 and was released from the Ascension Parish Jail on February 10.

After his release, detectives learned that Morris secured credit lines at a local bank while using false receivables as collateral while he was in the Ascension Parish jail. As a result, a motion to revoke his bond was issued and that he shall remain in the Ascension Parish Jail.

Detectives are currently still investigating further complaints that have been filed against Morris and even more charges may be pending upon completion of the investigation, added Sheriff Wiley.

Detectives initially arrested Morris on February 8 after receiving complaints regarding contractor fraud against him that began in December 2016.

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.

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.

In February, Morris was 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.

Morris also faces charges in Baton Rouge, Walker, and Denham Springs.

Anyone who may have been a victim of Matthew Morris from the August 2016 flood is urged to contact the Ascension Parish Sheriff’s Office at 225-621-4636.