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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General Moody Takes Action Against Gulf Coast Pool Company and Owner for Abandoned Jobs



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is taking legal action against a Gulf Coast pool company and its owner for taking large upfront payments from consumers and leaving jobs incomplete. According to an investigation by the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division, Cox Pools of the Gulf Coast, LLC, and its owner, Hillary Bello, accepted payments from at least 27 consumers in exchange for pool construction services, then failed to perform the services as promised—leaving consumers with unfinished pools and holes in backyards. The investigation further revealed that the company also refused to issue refunds for consumers with abandoned work.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Cox Pools and its owner ripped off more than 25 Florida consumers, taking more than \$1.5 million and never finishing the agreed upon jobs. The consumers were left with dangerous holes in their backyards and severe financial losses. This is unacceptable, and we are taking action to permanently ban this owner from operating a pool business."

According to the civil complaint, Cox Pools allegedly misrepresented the timeline for pools to be built, causing consumers to wait longer than a year for an unfinished pool. Additionally, Cox Pools refused to issue refunds to consumers for the work not performed. Attorney General Moody's Consumer Protection Division received complaints from at least 27 consumers about the defendants' business practices, collectively alleging more than \$1.5 million spent on untimely and incomplete pool projects.

The civil action seeks to permanently ban the defendants from engaging in certain activities related to the pool construction business. The action also aims to get a monetary judgment against the company and its owner. In addition, the defendants could be liable for more than \$250,000 in civil penalties and enhanced civil penalties for violating the Florida Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act.

Cox Pools customers harmed by the defendants can file a complaint with the Florida Attorney General's Office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.

To view the civil complaint, click [here](#).

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