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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Florida Attorney General's Office Files Criminal Charges Against Pool Contractors that Defrauded Hundreds of Floridians Out Millions of Dollars

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—The Florida Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution filed criminal charges against two pool contractors. Statewide Prosecutors charged Charles and Kristin Black with scheme to defraud and other counts for operating a pool contractor scheme. According to a law enforcement investigation, the defendants owned Legacy Pools, based in Brevard County. In a nearly three-year period, the defendants took large sums of money from hundreds of customers, including at least one senior, under the guise of building pools. However, instead of constructing the pools, the couple spent the funds on a lavish personal lifestyle, leaving customers out millions of dollars.

Acting Attorney General John Guard said, "The public needs to be careful when hiring a contractor for large projects like building a pool. Do not rely on just what the salesman tells you. Verify that the contractor is legitimate and has the wherewithal to perform by checking with prior customers, the Better Business Bureau, and other similar resources. There are unfortunately scammers, like this couple, out there. When law enforcement officers find fraudsters taking advantage of Floridians, the Office of Statewide Prosecution will hold them accountable."

According to the investigation, from October 2019 to August 2022, Legacy Pools took large sums of money from customers under the guise of building pools. The defendants used the money obtained from customers for pool contracts and instead use it to fund a lavish lifestyle – leaving hundreds of customers out millions of dollars and with holes dug in their yards instead of the promised pools. The defendants also lied on its permit applications in Brevard County about the costs of pools to exploit the county out of approximately \$48,000 in permit fees.

Throughout the course of the scheme, the defendants defrauded more than 300 victims in Brevard, Orange and Osceola counties, stealing more than \$2 million.

Charles and Kristin Black are each charged with one count scheme to defraud more than \$50,000, with a victim 65 years of age or older, one count scheme to defraud \$20,000 to \$50,000 and five counts of unlawful filing of false documents.

The Florida Attorney General's OSP will prosecute the defendants.

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