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Contact Whitney Ray

Phone 850-245-0150



Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

VIDEO: Attorney General Moody Releases Scams at a Glance: Sink or Swim

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody is releasing a new Scams at a Glance resource to help Floridians spot and avoid pool contractor fraud. As summer approaches, many families in the Sunshine State may seek the cool waters of a backyard, inground pool. However, contractors engaging in deceptive practices can leave a customer drowning in debt—with a huge hole in their yard instead of a promised pool. Attorney General Moody is releasing Scams at a Glance: Sink or Swim to help consumers avoid falling for fraudulent schemes when looking to hire a pool contractor.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “Inground pools are expensive home-improvement projects. If a consumer is not careful, thousands of dollars could be lost to a deceptive or inept pool contractor. Floridians looking to hire a pool contractor should check out our new Scams at a Glance resource to know how to avoid scams and where to report bad contractors or fraudulent activity.”

Scams at a Glance: Sink or Swim lists some of the most common pool contractor scams:

- Deep Discount Scam: When discounts are too good to be true and the contractor ends up being a scam;
- Bait and Switch Scam: When a contractor demands more money than agreed upon in the contract;
- Licensing and Insurance Scam: When a contractor uses fraudulent license numbers or insurance policies; and
- Deposit Scam: When massive deposits are required upfront but the contractor never starts the project.

The resource also provides tips for Floridians to avoid falling victim to pool-related fraud, including:

- Verify a contractor’s license with the [Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation](#);
 - Be wary of contractors who demand a large, upfront payment;
- Get multiple estimates and research a company thoroughly before signing a contract or providing a deposit; and
 - Ask to see a contractor’s proof of insurance.

Attorney General Moody's Office of Statewide Prosecution prosecutes fraudulent pool contractors that operate across judicial circuits following law enforcement investigations into the criminal activity. Attorney General Moody's Consumer Protection Division also takes civil actions involving pool contractors in violations of Florida's Deceptive and Unfair Trade Practices Act. Some recent cases from Attorney General Moody's OSP include:

- [An arrest of a statewide pool contractor for operating a fraud scheme of \\$1 million;](#)
 - [The conviction of a pool contractor on multiple felony charges; and](#)
 - [A 30-year prison sentence secured for a fraudulent pool contractor.](#)

An example of a recent Consumer Protection enforcement action includes:

- [Action against pool company for hundreds of jobs left unfinished.](#)

To download Scams at a Glance: Sink or Swim, click [here](#).

To file a complaint against a pool contractor, contact DBPR at MyFloridaLicense.com or by calling (850) 487-1395. Fraudulent activity should be reported to local law enforcement.

Floridians can file a civil complaint with Attorney General Moody's office by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM or visiting MyFloridaLegal.com.