

Attorney Warns: Beware Of Asphalt Paving Scams

Attorney Steven Getman is warning area residents to beware of scams concerning asphalt paving and driveway sealing.

The scams crop up every summer and follow a similar pattern, Getman said.

“Homeowners or merchants will be approached by a paving company rep making a cold call to say he's got asphalt left over from another job, and offering patchwork repairs at a low price,” Getman explained.

However, once an oral agreement is struck the pavers will commence to refinish the entire driveway or parking lot, and then present the victim with an exorbitant bill.

Sometimes when victims balk at paying, they are intimidated and threatened, police said.

Other times, the scammers offer a lifetime guarantee, but often the quality of the material used and application is inferior, and the work begins to crack quickly.

“Unfortunately, the paving crew is long gone by the time you discover you have a problem,” Getman said. “It may cost you more to redo the driveway after that.”

According to Getman, methods used by disreputable paving contractors can include:

- Little or no preparation work.
- Using cheap material
- Not using enough material
- Using untrained or inexperienced employees
- No way to contact them for repairs or follow up
- Intimidation or threatening of clients

Getman suggests that consumers take the following steps to protect themselves against scam companies:

- Contact the [Better Business Bureau \(BBB\)](#) for any complaints.
- Ask for local references and verify that the contractor is in compliance with local licensing, bonding and insuring requirements.
- Ask for identification and make note of the license plate number on the contractor vehicle.
- Solicit two or three bids for the work you are planning, but don't automatically accept the lowest.
- Make sure all bids are based on the same materials.
- Read all agreements and guarantees before signing.
- Make sure you understand all terms and conditions.
- Never sign a contract with sections left blank.
- Do not pay for work in advance. Pay by check when the work is completed to your satisfaction.

“There are plenty of quality local contractors in our area, so be wary of transient pavers,” commented Getman.

Getman recommends that anyone who's had contact with what they believe to be a fraudulent paving company to contact their local police department and/or a competent attorney to review their legal rights.

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