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PRESS RELEASE

**Chester County District Attorney and Police
Warn Citizens About Contracting Scams**

As Chester County heads into the summer home improvement season, the Chester County District Attorney's Office advises all homeowners to protect themselves from home improvement fraud.

District Attorney Tom Hogan stated, "Homeowners need to be vigilant when entering into home improvement contracts. There are certain steps that homeowners can take to protect themselves from being the victim of fraud."

Home improvement contractors are required to register with the Attorney General's Office. Homeowners should check the Attorney General's website, www.attorneygeneral.gov, to make sure that the contractor is registered. Homeowners also should carefully check contractor's references, obtain more than one bid for a job, and check for complaints filed with the Better Business Bureau.

Homeowners also should make sure that their home improvement contract is specific regarding the work to be done and the time frame within which the work should be completed. In order to prosecute a case, the statute requires that the contract list a final date for completion. Cases have been dismissed by the courts when a final date was not set forth in the contract.

The Willistown Police Department has experience dealing with home improvement fraud. Willistown Police Chief John M. Narcise stated, "We want to make sure homeowners have the tools to protect themselves from unscrupulous contractors. If an offer looks too good to be true, it probably is. Make sure to report suspected fraud to your local police department promptly."

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Approved for release:

Thomas P. Hogan