

District Attorney Marc Bennett
18th Judicial District of Kansas



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Wichita, Kansas – A local landscaping contractor was convicted by a Sedgwick County jury on Thursday of four counts of theft for taking money and not doing the work for homeowners in Maize, Bel Aire and Wichita.

James Arnold, 44, owner of Premier Lawn Care LLC, is set for sentencing on March 16, 2017, before Judge Jeffrey Syrios. Arnold listed a Kechi post office box as his business address. He was convicted of two felony counts of theft and two misdemeanor counts of theft.

The charges stemmed from landscaping contracts in 2015 and 2016 where Arnold was paid to complete work on residential properties. In three of the cases, victims testified that work was never started. In one case, the victim testified the project was started and then abandoned. The jury acquitted Arnold on a fifth count of misdemeanor theft.

The victims whose testimony resulted in convictions included a retired couple from east Wichita who hired Arnold to build a berm in their backyard to control rainwater runoff; a Maize couple who hired Arnold to install a lawn sprinkler system for a recently-built home; a Bel Aire homeowner who hired Arnold to place fill dirt in his backyard to prevent water erosion around a concrete patio; and a Bel Aire family that hired Arnold for a sprinkler system and landscaping around a new home. Total losses to the four homeowners was \$8,781.54.

The case was investigated by the Bel Aire Police Department, the Maize Police Department and the Consumer Protection division of the Sedgwick County District Attorney.

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