

District Attorney Marc Bennett  
18<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of Kansas



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Wichita, Kansas - A Wichita building contractor has made a full refund to a former customer to settle a case brought by the Consumer Protection Division of the Sedgwick County District Attorney's office.

Stephen Rapier of Rapier and Company was originally charged in District Court with felony theft for taking money but doing no work on a home improvement project for a Sedgwick County resident. The homeowner paid Rapier \$3,500 in July of 2015 to start work on finishing her basement, but no work was done. The homeowner filed a complaint with the Consumer Protection Division in November of 2015 after Rapier had missed several deadlines to start the work.

On Tuesday, March 8, Rapier returned all of the \$3,500 to the homeowner and entered a plea to a reduced charge of deceptive commercial practice. The Metropolitan Area Building and Construction Department found that Rapier did not have a contractor's license at the time he agreed to do the work for the homeowner, even though the contract stated that he did.

"Citizens should check out prospective contractors when planning any construction project," said Wess Galyon, President of the Wichita Area Builders Association.

"Contractors should be asked how long they've been in business, where they are located, what types of work they have done and whether they have a license and insurance. Copies of licenses and insurance certificates should be obtained. Homeowners should also get references."

You can find out about local contractors here: <http://www.wabahome.com/>. For roofing contractors in Kansas, check the Attorney General's roofing registry: <https://ag.ks.gov/in-your-corner-kansas/resources/roofing-registration>. To file a complaint about a contractor in Sedgwick County, contact the Consumer Protection Division of the District Attorney's Office at 316-660-3653.

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