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CRIMINAL DIVISION

CIVIC CENTER JUSTICE BUILDING
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Approved by 

On June 22, 2018, Lamberto Montano aka Albert Montano Lopez aka Albert M. Lopez was arrested at 1215 Truxtun Avenue for First degree Burglary, Theft by false pretenses, 2nd degree Burglary, Grand theft, Contracting without a license, Charging an excessive down payment, No workers compensation insurance and Petty theft.

Investigation by the Kern County District Attorney's Office, Workers' Compensation Unit revealed Montano, who is not a licensed contractor, routinely posted advertisements under the business name, "New Renovations" for granite and cabinet work in Facebook groups such as Connected, Facebook Marketplace, and on Craigslist. The posts are in Spanish and English.

According to victims and witnesses, Montano has represented himself as a licensed contractor, a granite and cabinet store owner, or just a handyman. He requested excessive down payments up front for materials and either started a substandard job then did not return; or took the down payment and never showed up to do the job. On occasion he brought other workers with him for whom he does not carry workers compensation insurance. Victims have reported they have seen posts from others on Facebook complaining that they were victimized by Montano as well.

Any person who believes they were defrauded by Montano is encouraged to call (661) 868-5859.

The following are some tips to follow when hiring an individual to work in and around your home:

- Use a licensed contractor otherwise you have little recourse when things go wrong.
- In California, all home improvement jobs totaling \$500 or more in combined labor and material costs must be performed by a licensed contractor.
- Verify the person's license through the Contractor's State Licensing Board at ChecktheLicenseFirst.com or 1.800.321.CSLB.
- Verify the contractor has workers' compensation insurance because if they don't and their employee is injured you could potentially be liable.
- A down payment cannot exceed \$1000.00 or 10% of the contract amount, whichever is less.
