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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Date: 05/29/08

Re: People v. Mark Steven Stalder, #1236367

Contact: Carol Shipley

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Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Mark Steven Stalder entered pleas of no contest, and was thereafter found guilty, of a felony violation of Business and Professions Code Section 7027.3 (Fraudulent Use of a Contractor's License) and a misdemeanor violation of Business and Professions Code Section 7028(a) (Contracting without a License) before the Honorable Marie S. Silveira. Deputy District Attorney John Goulart prosecuted the case for the People.

The charges stem from events occurring in late 2005 when Stalder was hired to build a home. Stalder held himself out as a licensed contractor, including presenting the victim with a business card and with invoices which included a preprinted contractor's license number and Stalder's name on them. The license number was in fact issued by the Contractors State License Board (CSLB) to an actual contractor for whom Stalder had previously worked. In fact, Stalder has never been licensed by CSLB, nor has he ever even applied for a license.

When the project failed to progress as promised and after a lot of excuses and explanations from Stalder, the homeowner checked CSLB's website (www.cslb.ca.gov) and discovered that Stalder was not licensed. The homeowner then had a structural engineer and a licensed contractor examine the home who found numerous, substantial errors. The cost to remediate the errors was approximately \$25,000.00. At that point, the homeowner had already paid Stalder construction costs of over \$121,000.00. Stalder later admitted that he had overcharged the homeowner \$50,000.00 and agreed to pay the money back. He made one payment of \$1,000.00 and nothing more.

The homeowner reported Stalder to CSLB. The CSLB investigated the case and turned their findings over to the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office for review and prosecution. Further investigation was completed by the District Attorney's Investigations Unit and the District Attorney's Consumer Fraud Unit filed charges and prosecuted the case against Stalder.

Stalder was placed on five years formal felony probation, ordered to be searchable for forged or fraudulent documents, pay restitution to the victim, not to contract without a license and serve 210 days in jail.

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