



**Oregon Construction Contractors Board**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Construction crime investigator retires**

Bruce Buffington, Chief Enforcement Officer in the Special Investigations Unit at the Oregon State Construction Contractors Board (CCB) is retiring January 31, 2006

Buffington started at the CCB as a Special Investigator under contract in 1992. He has been in his current position since 1996. In 2001 the legislature gave the agency complete jurisdiction to pursue and investigate civil and criminal crimes related to the construction industry.

Since 2001 Buffington has overseen the successful prosecution of over 100 civil and criminal cases in his career with the CCB.

Among his most successful convictions was that of Bill Bob Bickford who was on the run for three years after jumping bail on a \$100,000 bond. Bickford, who was featured on "America's Most Wanted," was convicted of scamming the elderly, by over-charging for shoddy roofing jobs. Bickford was never licensed as a contractor in Oregon.

The arrest came after a tip from a California police agency led him to a car repair shop in Puyallup, Washington. Buffington coordinated the capture with the assistance of Washington law enforcement. Bickford is currently serving a 26 month term.

Buffington is still waiting for one that got away. Gary Mandes fits the typical profile of a scam artist. He is suspected of bilking thousands of dollars from elderly citizens for asphalt seal coating jobs. Washington County has issued a warrant for Mandes arrest.

Buffington's law enforcement career was preceded by working as an Investigator in California during the 1970's. He worked for a firm where the well-known Johnny Cochran was a partner.

His career in law enforcement and interest in public safety won't end when Buffington leaves the CCB. He will continue as a volunteer in the Beaverton Police Departments Loss Prevention Program.

Additionally, Buffington, an avid cyclist, started a non-profit bicycle safety organization called NW Bicycle Safety Council (NWBSC). NWBSC will host safety events, sponsor rides and host cable television programs in Portland dedicated to public safety and cycling education.

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