



State of Georgia
Department of Insurance

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NEWS RELEASE

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HUDGENS: ROOFING CONTRACTOR ARRESTED; EMPLOYER SOUGHT

Atlanta, GA – Insurance Commissioner Ralph Hudgens announced today that Fraud Investigators in his office have arrested a Columbus, Ga., roofing contractor and have issued warrants on his employer for intentionally vandalizing the roofs of two homes in Muscogee County. Investigators alleged that the men damaged the houses in an attempt to benefit from the insurance claim payouts.

Arrested yesterday and booked into the Muscogee County Jail was Mark Phillip Zuckerman, 58, of 4201 Weems Road in Columbus. He is charged with two counts of Insurance Fraud and two counts of Second Degree Criminal Damage to Property. His employer, David Gonzalez, 33, is wanted on the same charges. Gonzalez operates America's Roofing in Columbus.

Investigators found, that in February 2018, Gonzales solicited his roofing inspection services to homeowners in Columbus and Midland, Ga., to help determine if recent weather events had caused damage to their roofs. Once on the rooftops, Gonzalez, along with Zuckerman would vandalize shingles and other material to mimic wind damage. Video surveillance of the homes provided to investigators shows the two men creating the destruction.

"Anyone who tries to create a fraudulent claim in Georgia will be arrested," Commissioner Hudgens said. "This type of fraud can drive up insurance premiums resulting in higher costs for all consumers."

Commissioner Hudgens would like to thank the National Insurance Crime Bureau for their assistance with the investigation, and the Muscogee County Sheriff's Office for their support in making the arrests. Insurance fraud is a felony that carries a penalty of two to ten years in prison, and a fine of up to \$10,000.

If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of David Gonzalez, you are urged to contact the Muscogee County Sheriff's Office at **706-653-4225**.

The Georgia Department of Insurance's Fraud Division investigates various forms of fraud in insurance, including health, life, auto, and property insurance. Anyone with information about this case or another possible fraud scheme should call the Department's Fraud Hotline at **1-800-656-2298**.