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Contractor Pleads Guilty to Insurance Fraud, Pays Over $150,000 in Victim Restitution

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that James Wood (DOB 04/11/72), of Simi Valley, pled guilty to two felony counts of workers' compensation insurance fraud. At the time of his guilty pleas, Wood paid full restitution to the victim insurance carrier State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) in the amount of $151,891.

Wood, a contractor, admitted to misrepresenting his total payroll and number of employees between 2015 and 2017, to fraudulently obtain lower workers' compensation insurance premiums, defrauding SCIF of $151,891.

The Ventura County District Attorney's Workers' Compensation Fraud Unit vigorously investigates and prosecutes insurance fraud in Ventura County. Workers' compensation premium fraud is not a victimless crime, it results in inflated costs to insurance carriers that are passed along to other law-abiding employers and, ultimately, to consumers. Perpetrators of premium fraud also obtain an unfair competitive advantage over law abiding businesses because their costs are much lower than their competitors'.

Sentencing in this case is scheduled for May 13, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 23 of the Ventura County Superior Court. Wood faces a maximum sentence of six years in jail.

# # #

The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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