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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Attorney General James Uthmeier's Statewide Prosecutors Secure Guilty Conviction of Olympus Pools Owner for Defrauding Floridians

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General James Uthmeier's Office of Statewide Prosecution secured a guilty conviction of the owner of Olympus Pools who defrauded Floridians. James Ivan Staten, Jr., owner and operator of Olympus Pools, stole more than \$1.5 million from Floridians and failed to complete customer pools. Staten was found guilty of 35 counts, including aggravated white-collar crime, organized scheme to defraud, grand theft, and contractor fraud. Staten accepted large down payments and left many customers in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, and Polk counties with no pools and destroyed yards.

"I'm proud to announce that Prosecutors Stephanie Bergen and Panagiota Papakos secured a guilty conviction for this fraudster who turned many Floridians' dreams of a backyard paradise into a nightmare, taking their money and digging holes to nowhere," said **Attorney General James Uthmeier**. "Little did this fraudster know, he'd be digging himself into a 20-year minimum prison sentence."

According to the law enforcement investigation, Staten preyed on numerous Florida property owners who contracted with Olympus Pools. Many customers would pay Staten upfront by personal check, credit card, cash, or through financing, expecting that Staten would build the pool in a reasonable timeframe. Instead, Staten stole the money, deposited the funds into Olympus Pools accounts, and transferred the money into a personal account to use for personal expenses.

After receiving a contract, Staten hired subcontractors to do the work for a customer and, in many cases, failed to pay the subcontractors. Staten's actions resulted in the subcontractors recording construction liens against the homeowners' properties.

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Pinellas County State Attorney's Office Division of Consumer Protection led the criminal investigation into Staten. The following law enforcement agencies also assisted in the investigation: Pasco County Sheriff's Office, Polk County Sheriff's Office, and Manatee County Sheriff's Office.

Previously, the Office of the Attorney General took civil action to shut down Olympus Pools, permanently shuttering the Tampa-based company. As a result of the civil action, the company is [enjoined permanently](#) from conducting business, and Staten is banned for life from operating a pool company in Florida.

Staten's sentencing is scheduled for May 7, and his conviction comes with a 20-year mandatory minimum prison sentence.

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