

CLEBURNE POLICE DEPARTMENT FRAUD ALERT

The Cleburne Police Department wants to warn citizens about home improvement scams that have been happening in our area. The suspects work an area and identify potential victims, frequently preying on the elderly. The suspects contact their victims and offer to conduct home repair work – repaving a driveway, roof repair or painting.

The suspect will initially offer to do the work at a deeply discounted rate using material that was “left over” from another job. The suspect will then charge a higher price than what was quoted for substandard work.

The suspects exert a great deal of pressure on their victims. One scenario might be to give them a bill right before the bank closes and pressure them to hurry to the bank to get money. Another tactic is to threaten to call the police on the victims after telling them that the materials that were used are stolen.

There have also been cases where the suspects take money from the victims to purchase materials and never return.

In one specific case in Cleburne recently, the suspects attempted to get in excess of \$70,000 from one family. Thankfully, an alert bank employee contacted police in time to stop the transaction.

WARNING SIGNS OF A HOME IMPROVEMENT SCAM

- The repairperson drives an unmarked truck or van with an out-of-state license.
- The worker has no business identification, local address or telephone number.
- You are offered a "special price" if you sign today.
- The worker wants upfront cost or fees, or accepts only cash.
- No written estimates or contracts are provided.
- The worker does not have any references.
- The offer sounds "too good to be true"
- The vehicles have out of state license plates
- The worker cannot provide any contractor's license, permits, insurance, or bonding information.