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## **Informational Alert – Is That Company for Real?**

by Stacie Harris, Economic Crimes Unit

You have a car that needs to be repaired, or maybe an appliance that needs fixing. How do you know who to call?

Most people will resort to their local telephone book to make a choice of someone to make their repairs. If they've got the biggest advertisement with the most color in the phone book, then they must be doing quite the business to pay for an ad like that, right? What's even more impressive, the advertisement says that they're endorsed by the Better Business Bureau and AARP and give senior and/or military discounts. So they must be a company that you should want to do business with and be legitimate, right? Not necessarily. Con-artists are everywhere and their only goal is to separate you from your hard earned money.

How do you check out a business?

First, personally check the company out with the Better Business Bureau by either calling (866)206-1800 or by visiting their website at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org) . They will be able to tell you whether or not they have a satisfactory business record with the BBB, whether they are an accredited member of the BBB and what kind of complaints they may have on the company and how those complaints were remedied.

Check with the Secretary of State by calling either (303)894-2200 or by visiting their website at [www.sos.state.co.us](http://www.sos.state.co.us) . Check to see whether they are in good standing and a legitimate business

If the business you are considering is for a home improvement project verify that the business is licensed with the Pueblo Regional Building Department located at 316 W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street. This can be done by calling (719)543-0002 or by visiting their website at [www.prbd.com](http://www.prbd.com) .

If the answers you receive from these agencies is unsatisfactory, then you may wish to reconsider whether you do business with the company.

***~ IDENTIFY A SCAM BEFORE A SCAM IDENTIFIES YOU! ~***