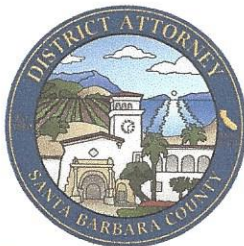


OFFICE OF THE  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

**JOYCE E. DUDLEY**  
District Attorney



DA 06-413

RELEASE NUMBER

June 1, 2017

RELEASE DATE

*Joyce E. Dudley*

APPROVED BY JOYCE E. DUDLEY, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Brian Cota, Sr. Deputy District Attorney

CONTACT (805) 568-242

\*\*\*\*\* PRESS RELEASE \*\*\*\*\*

**Re: Robert Lorin Musich, Case No. 1496861**

**WEST COVINA MAN TO BE SENTENCED IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY TO SEVEN YEARS STATE PRISON FOR OPERATING AN EXTENSIVE STATEWIDE FIRE EQUIPMENT INSPECTION SCAM**

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley announced today that on Wednesday, May 31, 2017, Robert Lorin Musich, from West Covina, California, plead guilty to multiple felony counts related to his operation of a fire equipment inspection scam. Additionally, Mr. Musich admitted an aggravated white collar crime enhancement that alleged the loss to the victims of his scam exceeded \$500,000.

The genesis of this investigation was a call made by Santa Barbara County Fire Chief Eric Petersen to Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce Dudley, based upon a call Chief Petersen received from a local business owner inquiring about the legitimacy of an invoice he had received. District Attorney Dudley then instigated an investigation performed by Supervising Investigator Chris Clement at the direction of Senior Deputy District Attorney Brian Cota.

As a result of this investigation, a joint press release from the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office and the Santa Barbara County Fire Department was issued warning county residents of a fire inspection scam being seen in Santa Barbara County.

As a result of this press release the public was warned to be on the lookout for invoices being sent to local businesses from a company called Red Mountain Security and Fire Protection, or RMS. Ultimately, several more local victims came forward. The invoices were for inspections of fire equipment at businesses that never took place. The amount invoiced was \$413.11.

During this ongoing investigation, the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office determined the perpetrator of the scam. On September 1, 2016, Mr. Musich was arrested in Pomona, California, and charged with crimes related to this scam.

SANTA BARBARA OFFICE  
1112 Santa Barbara Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2300  
Fax (805) 568-2453

SANTA MARIA OFFICE  
312-D East Cook Street  
Santa Maria, CA 93454  
(805) 346-7540  
Fax (805) 346-7588

LOMPOC OFFICE  
115 Civic Center Plaza  
Lompoc, CA 93436  
(805) 737-7760  
Fax (805) 737-7732

After his arrest, Senior Deputy District Attorney Cota contacted the California Franchise Tax Board who ultimately assisted the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office in investigating and charging tax related crimes.

The investigation by the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office and the California Franchise Tax Board lead to the identification of an additional 1,297 victims of Mr. Musich's scam throughout the State of California. The loss to those victims totaled \$502,189.91. When Mr. Musich was arrested, boxes full of hundreds of fraudulent invoices with envelopes were also found, ready to be sent out to businesses throughout the state.

District Attorney Dudley commented, "I want to commend the responsiveness of Chief Petersen as well as the vigilance and hard work on the part of Senior Deputy District Attorney Brian Cota and Supervising Investigator Chris Clement. Through their efforts, Mr. Musich has been held accountable for his crimes, both in Santa Barbara County and throughout the State of California. Additionally, further victimization of business owners throughout California has been prevented."

In addition to the California Franchise Tax Board, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department, Ontario Fire Department, Pomona Police Department, West Covina Police Department, Nevada State Attorney General's Office, Lake Havasu Police Department, and the United States Postal Inspector all assisted the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office with the investigation and apprehension of Mr. Musich.

It is expected that on June 28, 2017 Mr. Musich will be sentenced to seven years state prison. Additionally, he will be ordered to pay \$502,189.91 in restitution to the victims, and \$86,000 to the California Franchise Tax Board for unpaid taxes, penalties, interest, and the cost of investigation.

During the time that Mr. Musich was operating his scam in California, he was on probation in Nevada for charges stemming from the same type of scam in Nevada. When he finishes his California State prison sentence, Mr. Musich will be transported to Nevada where he faces an additional three years in state prison for his crimes there.

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