



California Public Utilities Commission

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUC INVESTIGATION RESULTS IN CRIMINAL CHARGES AGAINST PACIFIC COAST MOVING AND STORAGE, INC.

SAN FRANCISCO, October 27, 2003 - The California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) today announced that after a PUC staff investigation, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office and the Attorney General's Office jointly filed criminal charges on Oct. 7, 2003, against Warner Lee Fischer and Philip Edward Dresser, Jr., president and vice president respectively, of Pacific Coast Moving and Storage, Inc., an unlicensed household goods mover based in Granada Hills, CA.

The PUC's Consumer Protection and Safety Division (CPSD) investigated Pacific Coast Moving and Storage after receiving consumer complaints alleging overcharges, and damages to personal belongings. The investigation disclosed that Pacific Coast Moving and Storage continued to perform moving services after PUC staff directives to cease and desist all operations. The investigation also uncovered violations of PUC consumer protection rules that movers are required to follow.

Fischer and Dresser were each charged with 13 criminal counts. The charges include: one count of grand theft; one count of petty theft; two counts of operating a household goods carrier without a permit; three counts of advertising as a household goods carrier without a permit from the State PUC; two counts of failing to provide a customer with a completed agreement for moving service prior to start; two counts of failing to provide the shipper with a completed shipping document; and two counts of failing to provide required identification information about the business on shipping documents. Fischer was also charged with one additional count of knowingly filing a false business name statement. The corporation, Pacific Coast Moving, faces two counts of charging more than the "Not-to-Exceed" price and one count of failing to provide the shipper with a weigh masters certificate.

Fischer faces a maximum penalty of three and half years in jail and \$42,000 in fines and assessments. Dresser faces a maximum penalty three and half years in jail and \$39,000 fines and assessments. The corporation faces a maximum penalty of \$51,000 fines and assessments.

Fischer was arrested on a warrant issued on Oct. 7, and bail was set at \$20,000. The corporation with Fischer and Dresser is scheduled for arraignment on Oct. 28, 2003.

The Public Utilities Code makes it a crime to engage or attempt to engage in transporting used household goods without a valid PUC license. Consumers using unlicensed movers may suffer irreparable losses of personal belongings with little means of recovery.

Consumers are encouraged to call the PUC toll-free at 1-800-366-4782 to check the licensing status of household goods movers.

For more information on the PUC please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov.

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