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**EAST-SIDE CONTRACTOR SENTENCED FOR DECEPTIVE  
BUSINESS PRACTICES**

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal today announced the sentencing of an east-side contractor who remained a fugitive several months after he was scheduled to appear in court to face criminal charges.

24-year-old Daniel Barajas pled guilty this week to one charge of Deceptive Business Practice, a class "A" misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail and/or fine not to exceed \$4,000.00.

Court records show that Barajas failed to appear for a court hearing in December 2008. He was arrested again on October 6, 2009, and this week County Court at Law #1 Judge Ricardo Herrera sentenced him to six months in jail for the crime of Deceptive Business Practice.

According to the police complaint, on October 11, 2007 Barajas charged an east-side home-owner \$6,200 to construct a storage building; however the job was never finished.

El Paso County Attorney Jo Anne Bernal said her office is committed to prosecute vigorously these types of crimes.

"Consumers must be very cautious when it comes to giving builders money up front. Once the consumer has given money to the unscrupulous contractor, it is very difficult for us to get it back. This is why we recommend to the public to pay the complete amount of the contract only after the job is finished, and after corroborating the quality of the goods or services received," Bernal said.

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