Tacoma Couple Ordered to Reimburse $224,000 in Workers' Comp Fraud

Local News

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TUMWATER, Wash. - A Tacoma couple received jail time and will have to reimburse the state more than $200,000 after they both filed fraudulent workers’ compensation claims in 2009.Jaime Beroth, 63, and her husband Lawrence Beroth, 67, were sentenced this week after pleading guilty to one count each of second degree theft in Pierce County Superior Court.Both Beroths claimed they were injured at work and filed claims with the Department of Labor & Industries, claiming they could no longer work. But a tip to L&I led investigators to the couple’s drywall business where they were secretly videotaped doing a variety of physical tasks.During the two years they collected benefits from L&I, Jamie Beroth received more than $100,000 for her injury claim, and Lawrence Beroth collected $123,000 for his.

The Beroths told investigators that the couple’s business had experienced difficulties due to the economy.Jaime Beroth was sentenced to 30 days in jail and Lawrence Beroth received a 20 day sentence. The bulk of both sentences were converted to community service. The couple was also ordered to pay over $224,000 in restitution, fines and other costs.L&I’s Fraud Prevention and Compliance Program assessed $24.6 million in unpaid employer premiums plus penalties in fiscal year 2012. The program brings in nearly $9.30 for every dollar spent to fight fraud. More information is available at www.Lni.wa.gov/Main/Fraud.