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NEWS RELEASE

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March 9, 2020

## **Two Sentenced for Forgery, Grand Theft in Engineering Fraud Case**

Two men were sentenced today for falsifying documents and providing fraudulent engineering services for more than seven years, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

Wilfrido Rodriguez (dob 1/24/72) of Downey and Ruben Gutierrez (dob 5/8/74) of Huntington Beach were each sentenced to a year in county jail and placed on formal probation for five years. Rodriguez also must perform 150 days of community labor, while Gutierrez must complete 100 days of community labor.

Both men were convicted of multiple counts of forgery, identity theft and grand theft last November by Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Lisa Lench following a bench trial.

Rodriguez was convicted of more than 250 felony counts, while Gutierrez was convicted of more than 200 counts.

Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey Stodel of the White Collar Crime Division prosecuted the case.

Rodriguez was an engineering drafter and Gutierrez was a former architectural designer at Palos Verdes Engineering, but neither of the defendants were licensed architects or civil engineers.

Between 2007 and 2014, the defendants forged the signature of one of the licensed civil engineers that owned the engineering firm. Both men also used the victim's engineering seal in order to deceive homeowners and municipalities into believing that the victim had personally drafted the engineering plans and conducted structural observations as the structures were being built.

The victim did not review or approve any of the engineering plans created and submitted by the defendants and did not authorize Rodriguez and Gutierrez to use his seal, the prosecutor said.

Investigators estimate that there were more than 700 residential and commercial properties where fraud occurred in more than 50 cities in Southern California.

Case BA465793 was investigated by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's Fraud and Cyber Crimes Bureau.

### **[About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#)**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.