



ERIK NASARENKO
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Karen L. Wold
Title: Senior Deputy District Attorney
Telephone: (805) 662-1718
E-mail: Karen.Wold@ventura.org

Approved: CMT 
Date: Wednesday, January 27, 2021
Release No.: 21-008

Thousand Oaks Landlord Settles Civil Lawsuit with District Attorney

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that a civil settlement has been reached with Ashok K. Sharma (Sharma), of La Cañada, involving an apartment complex he owned located at 850 Warwick Avenue in Thousand Oaks. Under the terms of the stipulated judgment and settlement filed with the court earlier today, Sharma will pay \$1,000,000 to settle the case, including civil penalties as well as reimbursement for investigative costs to the District Attorney’s Office, City of Thousand Oaks, Ventura County Environmental Health Department and the Ventura County Fire Department.

The case was filed by the Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit of the District Attorney’s Office back on July 31, 2019, upon request of the City of Thousand Oaks following their 15-year effort to bring Sharma into compliance with habitable housing laws. The complaint alleges that while Sharma owned and operated the apartment complex located at 850 Warwick Avenue in Thousand Oaks, his tenants endured substandard building conditions including rat, roach, and bedbug infestations; along with hazardous electrical, plumbing and other unlawful, substandard living conditions. Additionally, the lawsuit alleges Sharma engaged in unfair competition pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 17200.

On August 8, 2019, Judge Vincent O’Neil issued a Temporary Restraining Order requiring Sharma to comply with the law. After a series of inspections conducted by local county officials, Sharma finally fumigated the building and completed overdue and necessary repairs. The District Attorney’s Office and City of Thousand Oaks recently concluded the apartment complex is now in substantial compliance

with the law. As part of the settlement reached between Sharma and the District Attorney's Office, the apartment complex was sold.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

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