



## Vancouver man suspected of swindling \$1 million from elderly woman

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**Andre Meunier, The Oregonian**

By

A 31-year-old Vancouver man is being held on \$1 million bail -- about the amount officials say he persuaded an elderly woman to pay him for overpriced home repairs and non-existent real estate investments, payments that have cost her home.

Richard M. Amaro appeared today in Clark County Superior Court after his arrest Friday. A District Court judge set his bail over the holiday weekend, and he is scheduled to enter a plea Feb. 29 to four counts of first-degree theft and two counts of second-degree theft.

According to a court document, Amaro charged the 78-year-old southeast Vancouver woman \$104,000 for a deck that should have cost \$6,900 and more than \$26,000 for siding and \$18,000 for a roof for her 1,678-square-foot home.

The home was paid off, and the woman had \$600,000 in investments before she met Amaro in 2002, the document said.

The woman "no longer has any of this money" and her home is in foreclosure because she cannot repay a \$285,000 mortgage she took out to pay Amaro for work and three non-existent homes she said he convinced her were investments, the document said.

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