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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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OWNER OF SHERLOCK HOMES INSPECTION SERVICES CHARGED WITH DEFRAUDING 138 HOME BUYERS



NORRISTOWN, Pa.--Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Souderton Police Chief James Leary announce the arrest of Joseph T. Michalski of Souderton for felony theft by deception, receiving stolen property and related charges for defrauding at least 138 home buyers throughout seven counties through his business, Sherlock Homes Inspection Services.

The Montgomery County Detective Bureau was alerted in January 2016 by a realtor and home buyer that Sherlock Homes Inspection Services billed the buyer for water testing that was never performed. The Montgomery County Detective Bureau launched an investigation that revealed that Michalski was selling home inspection services that included water, termite and radon testing. After examining records from the business, it was determined that 138 victims paid Michalski to perform testing that he did not perform and/or was not certified to perform. Michalski took more than \$18,000 from the victim home buyers in seven counties: Montgomery, Bucks, Berks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh and Philadelphia.

“Joseph Michalski, doing business as Sherlock Homes Inspection Services, has put these victims in jeopardy by falsely performing radon and water tests that could impact their health and the health of their families. Unfortunately, we think there is the possibility of additional victims that we don’t know about,” said Steele. “People bought houses thinking that tests had been performed by someone who is legally qualified to do so. Unfortunately, the purchasers went ahead and bought the home based upon the results the defendant provided, and they now may be living in a home with unhealthy levels of radon, which is linked to lung cancer, or with well-water that is unsafe.”

Anyone who contracted with Sherlock Homes Inspection Services to inspect their home should contact Detective Joe Kelly, Montgomery County Detective Bureau at 610-278-3368.

Michalski was charged with Theft by Deception and Receiving Stolen Property as well as 138 counts of performing testing and mitigation that required certification, which is a third-degree misdemeanor. Michalski was arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Albert J. Augustine today and released on \$20,000 unsecured bail. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for 2 p.m., July 6, 2016, in front of Judge Augustine in Harleysville.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Christopher Daniels.

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.