



# AMVIC News Release – 5 March 2009

## Curber convicted

### Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council (AMVIC)

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In December 2007, AMVIC charged five individuals who were importing salvage vehicles from the U.S., repairing them in Ontario and then as an unlicensed business sold them in Alberta to unsuspecting citizens. AMVIC partnered with Alberta Transportation and law enforcement agencies to complete this investigation.

Alberta citizens thought they were buying a late model vehicle with no accident. In some instances, the vehicles were actually two vehicles welded together. In all cases, the vehicles had been in major accidents and that was never disclosed to the Albertan consumer. There were about 100 vehicles brought into Alberta before the deceptive practices were uncovered and stopped.

On February 10, 2009 Andrew Mika of Calgary plead guilty and was convicted of 4 counts under the Alberta Fair Trading Act. He was fined a total of \$2,800 and he paid restitution to the victims totalling \$10,369.95.

AMVIC is continually watching for individuals that are selling or repairing vehicles without the proper location and without a license. These are often referred to as curbers or back alley mechanics. Anyone that is selling or repairing vehicles as a business is required to be licensed under the Fair Trading Act by AMVIC.

The Alberta Motor Vehicle Industry Council (AMVIC) is the authority delegated by the provincial government to protect Alberta consumers from wrongful behaviour in relation to the purchase or repair of motor vehicles. Business and consumers with questions or concerns about this investigation can contact AMVIC at 1-877-279-8200 or at [www.amvic.org](http://www.amvic.org).

### **Consumers should take the following precautions if they choose to purchase a vehicle privately instead of going to a licensed sales business.**

1. Ask to see the most recent registration and insurance for the vehicle. Ask to see receipts for any service done on the vehicle. This will be a good indication if the seller is being truthful. If the seller cannot provide such details, shop somewhere else.
2. Don't be rushed into buying a vehicle even if the seller says there is another interested buyer coming to look at it or it won't last long.
3. If the seller won't allow you to come to their residence or insists on meeting at some place neutral, that is a good indication they may be hiding something. Don't bother meeting with them.
4. If you choose to purchase the vehicle, first get it inspected by your own independent mechanic.
5. Check the vehicle's history. CarFax and CarProof are two popular reports that will give you important information from a third party. You can get these at a registry office or via internet websites.
6. Check for liens on the vehicle to make sure the person selling it actually owns it. This may miss ownership if a lien has not been registered for the vehicle but will show you if a financial institution has placed a lien.
7. Don't buy a vehicle at night.
8. If you are uncomfortable at all, walk away.

### **Broadcast email**

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