

# The Standard

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## Man charged with defrauding customers

By Standard Staff

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A 40-year-old St. Catharines man is in hot water after allegedly defrauding customers of his water purifier business.

Niagara Regional Police said members of the fraud unit started investigating the business practices of "Aquasmart" in January of this year.

Police said customers who previously purchased purifiers were allegedly approached by the accused and told about a recall that required them to replace the unit. They were asked to pay in advance, police said.

It is alleged the complainants paid for replacement units but a new one was never delivered.

Police said "Aquasmart" has no affiliation with Aquasmart Technologies Inc., a legitimate, registered business that distributes water-related products around the world.

On Thursday, police arrested Robert Klassen. He faces 15 charges including six counts of fraud over \$5,000, one count of fraud under \$5,000, four counts of misappropriation of funds over \$5,000, one count of misappropriation of funds under \$5,000, one count of theft, one count of attempted fraud and one count of unauthorized use of a credit card.

He was held for a bail hearing.