

# How to Hire a Contractor

## What must consumers know to avoid having problems with a contractor!

1. Try to hire a contractor from the general area;
2. Always get more than one (1) price and compare to make sure that the items are the same on both estimates, (materials and labor);
3. All estimates must be in writing;
4. Contractor should supply address, phone & license numbers, (before signing contract you may call the Building Department to check if contractor is registered with city or if a permit is required);
5. Be careful not to hire a contractor who only has a P.O. Box address;
6. Never pay a contractor up front;
  - A minimal deposit may be paid on signing;
  - A quarter or third payment upon delivery of materials is common;
  - If a permit is required, we do not recommend full payment until final inspection is approved;
  - Do not pay in full when work is only partially completed.
7. If you decide to use the contractor, you should remember the following:
  - Read the home improvement agreement carefully. If you are uncomfortable reading the agreement, ask someone (not the contractor) to read it for you;
  - Never let a salesperson pressure you into signing something that you do not understand;
  - Remember that you will have three (3) business days to terminate the agreement;
  - Always remember to ask for a copy of the contract;
  - If the contractor refuses to give you a copy of the agreement, you should cancel the contract immediately;
  - Make sure all of the blank spaces of the agreement are filled in before you sign the document.

Following the above rules may be time consuming but they will assist you in finding the best home improvement contractor for the job.

If you have any questions, call the Building Department at (313) 928-4441, (313) 928-4442 or (313) 928-4443.