

Tips on Hiring a Contractor

Unfortunately, after every natural disaster there are a few individuals who seek to take advantage of homeowners who have been victimized by the disaster. With the recent fires throughout San Diego County, there will inevitably be those individuals who will attempt to con homeowners. The District Attorney's Office offers the following advice for your consideration when you commence the challenge of rebuilding/repairing your home.

1. Hire a licensed Contractor.
2. Be wary of a contractor who initiates contact with you ("cold call").
3. Contact your insurance agency to determine if it has any information or places any conditions on your potential contractor.
4. Contact the Better Business Bureau.
5. Contact at least three references, and personally inspect a contractor's past work.
6. Insist on a written contract, and make sure you understand all of its terms before signing.
7. State law provides a down payment on a home improvement contract cannot exceed 10 percent of the contract price or \$1,000, whichever is less.
8. Never make cash payments, pay by check or other form which provides evidence of your payment.
9. Do not make your final payment under the terms of your contract until you are satisfied with the work AND the building department has signed a notice of completion.
10. Maintain all of your paperwork throughout your contract.
11. IF YOU BELIEVE THERE IS AN UNSCRUPULOUS CONTRACTOR IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, PLEASE CONTACT THE STATE CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE BOARD AND THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE IMMEDIATELY.

Important Contacts:

Contractors State License Board
P.O. Box 26000
Sacramento, CA 95826
www.cslb.ca.gov
1-800-321-2752
1-800-962-1125 (Information for Disaster Victims only)

Better Business Bureau
5050 Murphy Canyon Road, Suite 110
San Diego, CA 92123
www.sandiego.bbb.org
858-496-2131

San Diego District Attorney's Office
Economic Crimes Division
330 West Broadway, Suite 750
San Diego, CA 92101
www.sandiegoda.com
Telephone: 619-531-4070
Fax: 619-531-4481

If you're contacted by a suspicious charity, check to see if they are legitimate:

California Attorney General's Office
Registry of Charitable Trusts
110 West "A" Street, Suite 1100
San Diego, CA 92101
619-645-2001