

## Avoid Home Repair Fraud

### 1. Get several bids

- Try to get written bids or estimates from at least three different contractors. Check out the contractor.

### 2. Get the contractor's full name, address, and phone number.

- Ask for references and call them.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau and courthouse for criminal history and civil cases against the contractor.
- For repairs that cost more than \$10,000, ask the contractor for a copy of their Certificate of Registration with the Texas Residential Construction Commission.
- Be careful when dealing with contractors with out-of-state license plates.

### 3. Get a written contract

- Specify the work to be done
- Specify the price
- Don't sign anything you don't understand

### 4. Control the money

- Do not pay upfront for the entire job.
- Try to pay as little as possible upfront.
- It is against the law that contractors in disaster areas take any money upfront unless they have a local office in your county or one county over for at least one year.
- Insist on waiting to pay the total amount until after the work is finished.
- Please don't make the final payment until you have looked over the work. Make sure you are satisfied with the repairs
- Do not pay in cash

Report bad contractors to the Better Business Bureau, the Texas Attorney General, the local district attorney, and if you need legal help, you can apply with Lone Star Legal Aid.