



## Avoid Home Repair Fraud

### 1. Get several bids

- Try to get written bids or estimates from at least three different contractors. Try to get referrals. Check out on-line reviews.

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

- Ask for references and call them.
- Check with the 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.
- Do not sign anything you do not 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. Special rules protect you if the contractor does not have a local office in your county or the next county over.
- Please do not 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, and the local district attorney.

1-800-733-8394 [www.lonestarlegal.org](http://www.lonestarlegal.org)

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