



WARNING SIGNS

Contractors who show up at your door if you haven't made an appointment.

Contractors who require all of the funds in advance or a sizeable amount of the project cost in advance.

Contractors who want checks made directly to them vs. their business name.

Contractors who use high pressure to get your money.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND CONTACTS

If you think you've gotten "nailed" in a home repair scam, you can call:

The Johnson County District Attorney's Office

**Consumer Protection
Hotline:**

(913) 715-3003

or

**White Collar Crime Unit
913-715-3140**

Johnson County District Attorney's Website

<http://da.jocogov.org>

Johnson County Contractor Licensing

<http://contractorlicensing.jocogov.org/>

National Association of the Remodeling Industry

<http://www.nari.org/>

HOME REPAIR FRAUD



From the
Office of the District Attorney
Tenth Judicial District

Stephen M. Howe
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Johnson County, Kansas
Consumer Protection



INTRODUCTION

Each year, the Consumer Protection Division receives numerous complaints about contractors and home repair fraud. In fact contractor cases continue to be our top complaint year after year.

Those numbers unfortunately translate into thousands of dollars consumers lose to unscrupulous contractors.

Some of the most common ways consumers get “nailed” in home repair scams include:

Contractors who take the consumers’ money and disappear without doing any work. This often happens when consumers hire fly-by-night contractors who show up at their door.

Contractors who take consumers’ money and fail to finish the work promised.

Contractors who do shoddy work.

Contractors who are not licensed and insured.

THE LAW

Under Kansas law, consumers are protected from unethical contractors who

take their money and don’t do the work.

Each year, our office helps consumers resolve complaints against their contractors and mediates numerous complaints to recover restitution for consumers.

The Kansas Consumer Protection Act, however, does not cover shoddy workmanship. In those cases, consumers may need to hire a private attorney and seek civil action on their own.

Protect Yourself

To protect you from getting taken by an unscrupulous contractor:

Never pay for work in advance. If a contractor demands money up-front for supplies, buy them yourself. That way you’ll have something to show for your money if the contractor disappears.

Check with your City Hall Codes Department to determine if the contractor needs a permit for the job. Verify if the contractor is licensed to perform the work. If the contractor isn’t licensed he can not pull the appropriate permits.

Require a written proposal that outlines the work to be done, a start and completion date and when draws will be furnished as work is completed and inspected. The proposal should indicate the businesses’ street address and a land line telephone number.

Ask friends and relatives for recommendations.

Get three written estimates, check references, licensing and insurance.

Be wary of hiring anyone who just shows up at your door, especially those who claim to have “leftover” materials and can give you a great deal. Reputable companies don’t operate that way.

Be leery of contractors who promise to get you financing, demand cash payments, or pressures you to make an immediate decision.

Do your homework BEFORE you hire a contractor – not after the fact.

Contractors should provide a copy of their insurance documents at the time of the proposal. Don’t hesitate to ask for this information and contact the provider to determine if the policy is current and up to date.