

GUIDE TO SELECTING A CONTRACTOR

As human beings we want to protect our families and our possessions; so when disasters strike and harm our families or destroy our homes we want to take immediate action to protect those things. The City of Garland wants those same things for you; inasmuch, the City wants to warn you about the potential for unscrupulous contractors that may attempt to take advantage of your protective instincts.

With the recent disaster there will be an influx of “storm chasers” and “fly-by-night” contractors that will make their way to our community in an attempt to cash in. The City wants you to be warned that they will be out there and they use very high pressure sales techniques to get your business. The City feels that the more information you have the better decisions you can make regarding your home. Here are few tips to help you:

- Be wary of a contractor that tells you that you don’t need a contract.
 - Always get a contract that describes the work to be done, a time frame to complete the work, the cost of the work and payment expectations.
 - Make sure both parties sign the contract.
- Do not put down a deposit or pay money up-front.
 - A roofing contractor may be subject to Chapter 58, Texas Business and Commerce Code. That law provides that, for disaster remediation work, unless your contractor has maintained a physical business address in either Dallas County, Texas or a county adjacent to Dallas County for at least one year preceding the date of your roofing contract, then your roofing contractor may not require full or partial payment (such as a deposit or down-payment) before the contractor begins work and, after the work begins, may not require partial payments in an amount that exceeds an amount reasonably proportionate to the work performed, including any materials delivered.
- Be sure that the contract will require that all work will meet the minimum standards of the Building Code, that a permit will be obtained and that the final inspection is approved by the City Inspector.
- Be sure to check the Better Business Bureau and make sure the company is in good standing.
- Be sure to ask for and check references. Ask your family and neighbors for recommendations for contractors they may have used in the past and they were pleased with the work.
- Ask if the contractor is a member of a professional organization such as the Dallas Builders Association, North Texas Roofing Contractors Association, Roofing Contractors Association of Texas, National Association of the Remodeling Industry, Texas Association of Builders, etc.
- Verify the business address of the contractor and determine the length of time at that location.
- Request a copy of their certificate of insurance, understand what it covers and make sure the coverage is in effect throughout your project.
- Get any materials or labor warranty in writing.
- Ask for a list of local material suppliers that they use and check with the supplier to see if the contractor is in good standing with the suppliers.
- To protect your property from unpaid subcontractors or suppliers, consider requesting a lien waiver from the contractor, subcontractors and suppliers.
- Obtain multiple bids for the work and be wary of bids that are significantly lower than the others. They may not be providing the quality of materials that you desire.
- Don’t succumb to intimidation, scare tactics or threats.
- Do not hesitate to call the City Building Inspections Department (972-205-2300) should you have any questions.