



Press Release

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BBB Tips on Storm Damage Repair

If you are on the hunt for a reputable contractor after severe weather rolled through the area yesterday, be aware of those who may try to take advantage of your situation: The home repair rip-off artist who may overcharge, perform shoddy work, or skip town without finishing your job.

BBB urges homeowners to use extreme caution when dealing with "door-to-door" or "out of state" solicitors who offer "quality work at great prices." The BBB offers the following tips for consumers who may be facing major repairs after a disaster hits home:

- Contact your insurance company immediately.
- Deal only with licensed and insured contractors. Verify the track record of any roofer, builder or contractor you're thinking of hiring. Ask for a list of recent customers and call them.
- Get recommendations from friends, relatives, neighbors, co-workers, insurance agents or claims adjusters. Also check with the local Better Business Bureau and Home Builders Association to see if complaints have been lodged against any contractor you're considering.
- Get 2 or 3 estimates before you decide who to hire for the job.
- Take your time signing a contract. Get a written estimate that includes any oral promises the contractor made. But remember to ask if there's a charge for an estimate before allowing anyone into your home. Ask for explanations for price variations, and don't automatically choose the lowest bidder. Get a copy of the final, signed contract before the job begins.
- Resist dealing with any contractor who asks you to pay for the entire job up-front. A deposit of one-third of the total price is standard procedure. Pay only by check or credit card - and pay the final amount only after the work is completed to your satisfaction. Don't pay cash.
- Be skeptical of contractors who encourage you to spend a lot of money on temporary repairs. Make sure there's enough money for permanent repairs.
- Ask a knowledgeable friend, relative or attorney to review a home repair contract before you sign. If you get a loan to pay for the work, be cautious about using your home as security: If you don't repay the loan as agreed, you could lose your home. Consider asking an attorney to review the loan documents, as well.

Before you hire, check out the company's BBB Business Review at www.bbb.org or call 1-800-388-2222.

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For more information:
1-800-388-2222
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