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Three protections for consumers as construction projects soar

(Salem) – Construction projects are on a rapid rise. According to the Oregon Economic and Revenue Forecast, the rate of new construction recently hit its highest mark in more than 10 years. Consumers looking to purchase or build a new home or remodel an existing home should make sure their contractor follows three important safeguards.

The State of Oregon requires homebuilders:

1. To be licensed, bonded, and insured
2. To obtain all necessary construction permits, and have regular inspections performed
3. To use licensed tradespeople

When contractors meet these three requirements, consumers know they are protected from jobsite accidents, that the work will be done properly, and critical jobs such as plumbing and electrical work will be performed by people with the proper training and experience.

“It is crucial for consumers to make sure when they buy or remodel a home, no matter how big or small the project, that state consumer protection laws are followed,” said Mark Long, Building Codes Division administrator. “From a simple remodel to an elaborate home build, Oregonians should protect their investment by ensuring their contractor meets these basic requirements.”

If you are buying a home or in the middle of a home building project, ask if your contractor follows required disclosure and contract laws and offers a warranty. Consumers can use these resources to make sure the job is done right:

- To check the licenses of contractors, go to <http://search.ccb.state.or.us/search/>
- To verify the licenses of plumbers and electricians, go to <http://www.oregon.gov/bcd/licensing/Pages/search.aspx>

Contact your local building official to ask questions, and check permit and inspection information. Visit www.oregon.gov/bcd to find the building official for your area.

Finally, make sure you read and understand any contract before you sign it.

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The Building Codes Division (BCD) adopts the statewide construction standards, which ensure a uniform and predictable regulatory environment in Oregon. For more information, visit www.oregon.gov/bcd and click “local building department directory” (under resources).

The Department of Consumer and Business Services is Oregon's largest business regulatory and consumer protection agency. For more information, go to www.oregon.gov/dcbs.