



TOOLS & TIPS

CCB'S HOMEOWNER NEWSLETTER

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Oregon Construction Contractors Board

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3 Things to Know When Hiring a Licensed Contractor During COVID-19

COVID-19 has affected many industries, including construction. For homeowners with improvement projects, hiring a contractor during COVID-19 may seem daunting. CCB can help! Below, we've provided answers to three important questions that can help you start your home improvement project.

1. Are contractors still able to work?

CCB has worked with OSHA and the construction industry to develop safe worksite practices for construction sites during COVID. As of the date of this publishing, August 21, 2020, licensed contractors are still active in the state of Oregon. This includes contractors of all kinds: roofers, plumbers, electricians, home builders, concrete layers, brick layers, framers, pool builders, tree trimmers and remodelers – they're still working and available to help homeowners with projects like repairs, upgrades, improvements and home construction projects.

2. Does the CCB still provide services to homeowners?

Yes! CCB is able to provide the same level of service that we offered in the days before the pandemic.

- **License verification services and license history information.**

We maintain an online site where you can check your contractor's license to be sure it's active:

<http://search.ccb.state.or.us/search/>. We also provide up to 10 years of history on any contractor's license, including information about unpaid debts, complaint history and disciplinary history. Unable to access our online search? Call our office at 503-378-4621. We can give you the same information over the phone.

- **Live answering the phones.** You can call us with your home improvement questions such as: who needs to be licensed? Is this license still active? What should I do if I'm in a dispute with my licensed contractor? And so on.

- **Mediation services.** Sometimes home improvement projects go wrong. If you're in a dispute with a licensed contractor, we offer mediation services to help bring both parties together. Our mediation services can help keep you out of court and hopefully get your home improvement project back on track.



- **Informational services to homeowners.** We offer many publications to homeowners to help them with their improvement projects, and we're always available to answer questions. See below, some of our most popular publications:
 - ◊ [Selecting and Working with a Contractor.](#) This guide walks you step-by-step through the process of hiring and working with a contractor, and answers common home improvement project questions.
 - ◊ [Consumer Checklist.](#) This helpful checklist provides a handy to-do list for your next home improvement project.
- You can find more of our publications on our website at <https://www.oregon.gov/ccb/Pages/publications.aspx>. Some of our publications are also available in hard copy. We're happy to mail you a copy to help with your upcoming home improvement project. Send your request to ccbeducation@ccb.state.or.us.

3. Has the process for hiring a licensed contractor changed?

The process for hiring a licensed contractor remains much the same.

- **Get multiple bids.** This helps you identify the contractor who is most likely to meet your needs.
- **Check the license.** Use our online verification system to ensure the contractor you want to hire has an active license.
- **Get references.** Check two or three references before hiring any contractor, especially for big projects.
- **Read the contract.** CCB recommends getting a contract for all home improvement projects, but a contract is required for work greater than \$2,000. Read the contract thoroughly before signing.
- **Communicate concerns up front.** If you have concerns directly related to COVID-19, be up front with your contractor before hiring. Don't assume both parties are on the same page about issues relating to social distancing, sanitation and so on. Consider the scope of your project and work with your contractor to develop a plan that will allow the project to proceed safely.

Still have questions? Email Leslie Culpepper, the Communications and Education Manager at the CCB: leslie.culpepper@state.or.us. You can also call our main line at 503-378-4621.

Know Someone Making Home Improvement Projects? Tell Them About Our Newsletter!

We've created this newsletter to reach homeowners around the state regarding issues they face when hiring a contractor. In the coming months, we'll be covering topics like:

- Avoiding Unlicensed Contractor Scams
- Steps to Maintaining Good Communication With Your Contractor
- Steps to a Smooth Home Improvement Project
- Did You Know? Resources for Homeowners Starting an Improvement Project

Spread the word about CCB's newsletter! If you know someone who could use advice about hiring a contractor, the link to our sign up is located at: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORCCB/subscriber/new>

If you have received this newsletter through our web delivery service, you can also find it on our website at: <https://www.oregon.gov/ccb/news/Pages/Homeowner-Newsletters.aspx>