



Development & Neighborhood Services Department  
100 S. Myrtle Avenue, Suite 210  
Clearwater, FL 33756  
Telephone: (727) 562-4567 Fax: (727) 562-4576  
[www.myclearwater.com](http://www.myclearwater.com)

## DEALING WITH CONTRACTORS

---

### CHOOSING A CONTRACTOR:

Here are some suggestions to help you choose a contractor.

- Ask people you know for names of contractors they have used.
- Call the following for information on the type of contractor you need.
  - Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board @ 536-4720
  - Office of Consumer Affairs @ 530-6200
  - Better Business Bureau @ 535-5522
  - City of Clearwater Chamber of Commerce @ 461-0011
- Once you have a list of contractors, ask for references.
- Make sure you are comfortable with the contractor and that good lines of communication exist.
- Check the contractor license, by calling the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board (PCCLB) at 536-4720. They can tell you what type of license the person has, and if any complaints are filed on the contractor.
- Check the contractor's insurance coverage. The contractor should carry comprehensive policies to protect his business and your home, including public liability, property damage protection, and workers' compensation. You may want an original from the insurance company, listing your name.
- Ask for written quotes with **all details** from more than one contractor. It is advisable to get at least three contractors to provide bids. **Remember** - the lowest price is not always the best one. It could mean a misunderstanding of the project.

### THE CONTRACT

Regardless of the relationship you develop with your contractor, the details and agreements of the job should be in writing. Here are some tips:

- Include the building plans and/or work specifications in the contract.
- Specify start and finish dates in the contract to protect your interests. You need to realize that bad weather; unavailable materials or other problems may change these dates.
- Include pay schedules for the work and itemized prices for the work.
- You may want to have a lawyer review all contracts and related documents before you sign.

- Don't make a large first payment. You may want to consider not paying for the project in full until you have a completed project and an approved final inspection.
- If there are warranties or guarantees of the work, make sure they are clearly stated with all terms and conditions included in writing and signed by the contractor and/or manufacturer.
- Make sure you and the contractor both sign the agreement, with each of you keeping original copies.
- **ASK THE CONTRACTOR FOR THE PERMIT BEFORE WORK BEGINS.**
- **ASK ABOUT THE NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT.**

## **SOURCES FOR RETROFITTING INFORMATION**

- Local architects and engineers
- Protecting Manufactured Homes from High Winds - FEMA Doc. TR-75
- Flood Emergency & Residential Repair Handbook - FEMA Doc. FIA-13
- Retrofitting Flood-prone Residential Structures - FEMA-114
- Manufactured Home Installation in Flood Hazard Areas - FEMA-85
- Design Guidelines for Flood Damage Reduction - FEMA-15
- Elevated Residential Structures - FEMA-54
- Coastal Construction Manual - FEMA-55
- Repairing Your Flooded Home - FEMA-234
- Hurricane Resistant Construction - Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI)
- Standard for Hurricane Resistant Residential Construction SSTD 10-93 - SBCCI
- Construction Standard for Residential Structures RCS-94. The Contractors and Builders Association of Pinellas County, Inc.

### **NOTE:**

Some of the publications above are available at the Clearwater Library.

All FEMA documents are available from:

**Publications Department  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
P.O. Box 70274  
Washington, DC 20024  
or call 1-800-480-2520**