

TIPS ON CONTRACTOR SELECTION CITY OF CLEVELAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

On occasion, we have received complaints from disgruntled citizens expressing their displeasure with the performance of their contractors. In an effort to help avoid this reoccurrence, we have formulated a list of items to consider and offer the following suggestions:

- It is advisable to get at least three bids on a project. This can help you make an informed decision.
- NEVER pay for a project in advance. You should be wary of any contractor asking for a total payment up front prior to any work being started. A small retainer fee or payment for necessary materials may be appropriate.
- NEVER use a contractor who says no permits or inspections are required. Be careful of contractors intending to do work without established safety or structural standards. Additions or alterations to your home contrary to city ordinances can drastically affect any title transfer or insurance requirements, should you ever decide to sell your home.
- **Be especially wary of contractors suggesting you obtain permits for their work.** If you obtain the permit for a contractor, then you will be responsible for their work. Contractors like to do this to relieve themselves of responsibility.
- ALWAYS use only licensed contractors. Insist on seeing evidence of a current license. The following trades require a license:
 - A. Electricians
 - B. Plumbers
 - C. Air Conditioning Contractors
 - D. Irrigation Contractors
- Contractors must be registered with the city before doing any work.
- ALWAYS ask for a list of previous jobs similar to your proposed project. Ask for references AND check them.
- Ask for the address of the contractor's place of business. Drive by his place of business to get a good idea of his business practices.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau for any complaint records on your contractor.
- Before your project begins, insist on seeing the permit. During the course of your project, monitor your contractor's inspection records. This will protect you from being responsible for code violations and ensure project completion.

We hope your job goes well and call us with any questions to help with your next construction project.

NOTE: This is not an exhaustive list. It is merely suggestive and not legally binding on either party.

This handout is for informational purposes only and should not be relied on in place of official regulations and/or policies. The CITY OF CLEVELAND makes no representations, guarantees, or warranties as to the accuracy completeness, currency, or suitability of the information provided via the handout. Customers and citizens are personally responsible for complying with all local, state and federal laws pertaining to projects within the city. Copies of the CITY OF CLEVELAND adopted codes and Zoning Ordinances can be found on the city website at www.clevelandtexas.com or at the CITY OF CLEVELAND City Hall located at 907 E. Houston St., Cleveland Texas.