

# PRESS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

For more information contact:  
Vicki Pickering, Attorney  
Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board  
4100 Richard Road  
North Little Rock, Arkansas 72117  
(501) 371-1504  
vicki.pickering@arkansas.gov

## TIPS FOR HIRING A CONTRACTOR TO REPAIR STORM DAMAGE

### How to protect yourself from substantial financial and emotional loss

North Little Rock, Arkansas, March 15, 2010 -- On March 10, 2010, the State of Arkansas was once again hit by severe tornadoes causing damage to many homes and businesses throughout the state. Springtime in Arkansas always brings the threat of severe weather and the possibility of storm damage to your home or business. The widespread damage also brings out dishonest contractors hoping to take advantage of vulnerable consumers. With this in mind, it is important for the Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board to point out some tips in selecting and hiring contractors to repair this damage in order to protect against financial and emotional loss. The tips are as follows:

- 1. Plan your project:** Detail what you want done and the type of contractor you will need to complete it. No two projects are the same and may require a specialty licensed contractor.
- 2. Get 2-3 estimates:** When comparing estimates from different contractors, don't just compare the bottom line cost. Look at the cost and quality of materials for each one. Be sure the estimate includes the total price, the materials to be used, a time table for payments and the expected time for completion of the work..
- 3. Check at least 3 references:** Ask your contractor for three references in writing. When speaking with the references ask if they were satisfied with the contractor's work. Ask if the contractor kept to the schedule and contract terms.
- 4. Require a written contract:** The contract should be a detailed description of the work to be done, the material to be used and the equipment to be installed. Be sure there is a schedule of payments and a time line for when the work will be completed. Any changes that occur should be noted in writing.
- 5. NEVER PAY ANY MONEY UP FRONT AND DO NOT MAKE FINAL PAYMENT UNTIL THE JOB IS COMPLETE:** Beware of a contractor who is asking for a payment so they can buy the materials to begin your project. NEVER pay for something that has not been completed and DO NOT pay for anything in cash.

6. **Monitor the job in progress and keep all the paper work:** Check in regularly on the progress. Be sure to keep a file of all papers and documents, including the contract, written changes, bills and invoices. This should also include photos of the job in progress.

7. **Verify that the contractor has the appropriate licenses and permits to do the job:** Get proof that the contractor has the necessary licenses and permits by contacting the State Licensing Board and/or the city in which the work is to be performed.

Please remember that if you have any questions at all about the contractor you wish to use, you may contact the Arkansas Contractors Licensing Board at (501) 372-4661.