



## CHECKING A CONTRACTOR'S REFERENCES

The MN Department of Labor and Industry licenses residential building contractors, remodelers, roofers and manufactured home installers. The department requires certain standards of education and professional conduct be maintained to obtain and retain a license.

Licenses are required for all residential building contractors and residential remodelers who contract with a homeowner to construct or improve dwellings by offering more than one special skill. Owners working on their own property must also be licensed if they build or remodel for the sole purpose of speculation or resale.

The Department of Labor and Industry also makes available **information for homeowners** about how to safely hire a residential building contractor. To learn more go to: <http://www.dli.mn.gov/ccld/rbc.asp>

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Adding a room, renovating a basement, or doing some much-needed repairs? Finding a good contractor is important – a home improvement project gone wrong can cost you. A good ad isn't proof a contractor does quality work. Find out for yourself. Check with friends, neighbors and co-workers who've had improvement work done, and check out a contractor's reputation on online ratings sites you trust. Get written estimates from several firms, keeping in mind the lowest bidder may not always be the best choice. **Also important: be aware and know the signs of a scam.**

After you've settled in on a shortlist of contractors—whose work you admire and budget you can live with—it's time to start checking their references. Here's how to research them so you can mitigate risk before making the choice. Go to: <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0242-hiring-contractor>