

FIVE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO BEFORE CHOOSING A PLUMBING, HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING, SEWER OR ANY TYPE OF CONTRACTOR.

Dear:

I developed this letter after listening to many horror stories over the last thirty-eight years from our customers about their experiences with the contractors they have hired. They all thought they were hiring a contractor who gave them the lowest bid.

Once the work started the customer realized they did not have professional people; they had signed a contract with a friend of a friend, a handyman, side jobber, moon lighter, or a jack-of-all-trades man who was parading as an established contractor.

In many of these cases the so-called contractor came with good referrals from friends so the customer thought they couldn't go wrong, the price was right, many had yellow page advertisements stating they were licensed, bonded and insured. So the customer didn't ask for validation of the license, bond or proof of insurance. As the problems, grief and aggravation mounted the customer realized the person they hired had no license or insurance.

One customer relayed to me that they had to pay the hospital bill and convalescent period for an employee of their contractor. The contractor had public liability and property damage insurance but no workmen compensation insurance, the worker was injured while on the customer's job and he filed suit against them. The homeowner's insurance did not cover outside contractor's employees, which became a very expensive lesson for them, they realized the lowest bid was not the best bid.

*** CONTACT THE PLUMBING COUNCIL OF THE CHICAGOLAND AREA.** Give them the name of the contractor you choose to do your work. They will advise you of their standing.

*** REQUEST A COPY OF THE CONTRACTOR'S INSURANCE.** This is called a certificate of insurance. Verify that they have public liability, property damage and workmen's compensation insurance. Check the amount of coverage; choose the contractor with highest amount of coverage in each category. You should not rely on the contractor's verbal verification of having insurance, ask for a copy of their certificate of insurance before work is started. The contractors who say they have them but do not give you copies, avoid them, they are lying.

*** REQUEST A COPY OF THE CONTRACTOR'S LICENSES.** Verify the individual's name on the licenses. All contractors who have a certificate of insurance and licenses are proud to supply you with copies. Qualified plumbing contractors have four licenses; plumbing license, home repair license, sewer license and an Illinois EPA license. Sewer contractors have only one license. Make sure the license numbers are on your written proposal.

*** SCRUTINIZE YOUR PROPOSAL.** Insist that it is itemized and spelled out in detail for all the job functions. You should not accept descriptions such as these:

We will install a kitchen; We will install a bathroom; We will install a new water service; We will install a flood control system; We will install a furnace; We will install an air conditioner; etc...

Many times as the job progresses the consumer is told this is an extra, that is an extra, yet the consumer thought it was part of the proposal due to a lack of detail in the job function descriptions.

*** CONSULT YOUR ATTORNEY.** You should have your attorney review the bids you receive from all contractors. It's not everyday you spend thousands of dollars for repairs or replacements. An attorney's review of proposals may cost \$100 - \$150 but will be well worth those dollars for his professional opinion.

I have not met any one who was ripped off or taken advantage of who followed these five important things to do before hiring a plumbing contractor, heating contractor, air conditioning contractor, or sewer contractor.

Sincerely, **ACCURATE PLUMBING, HEATING, AIR CONDITIONING AND SEWER CO.**



Plumbers



through



cooperation

