

It's hard to get good help.

Remember Fritz, the electrical contractor? You know, the guy your cousin Louie said was a close personal friend. When he rewired your house, everything *looked* okay. Then your toaster started playing easy listening music, the TV went off when you opened the refrigerator, and all the lights in the house came on the moment you set your alarm clock. It pays to look before you leap. This brochure will tell you how. And remember, call the BBB any time you hire a contractor. That's part of what we're here for, and our referral services are free.



Border Roofing Contractors
Association of El Paso
(915) 479-2709



El Paso Association of Builders
(915) 778-5387



National Association of the
Remodeling Industry
(915) 587-6274



Building Services
(915) 541-4700



El Paso Apartment Association
(915) 598-0800



Associated Plumbing-Heating-
Cooling Contractors of El Paso
(915) 778-5929



Independent Electrical Contractors
(915) 532-4432



Better Business Bureau
(915) 577-0191



Borderland Inspectors
(915) 778-5387



Good Work.

Construction
Advisory
Roundtable

221 N. Kansas #1101
El Paso, Tx 79901
Phone: 577-0191
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Hiring a contractor got you worried?

Here's how to get Good Work.



Do a little homework.

Don't be timid about asking your contractor for references, including banking and supplier references. Find out if he has work in progress that you can go observe. While you're doing that, it wouldn't hurt to ask the homeowner how he feels about the contractor. Also, check the Building Services Dept. with the city of El Paso to see if the contractor is insured and bonded, and if he needs a license to do the work. The contractor should have a physical address and general liability, tax identification number and license when required. Check with the Better Business Bureau and the appropriate association.

Shop for value, not the lowest bid.

You should always get bids from three contractors before you make a decision. But compare apples to apples. When it comes to heating systems, compare the size and brand name of the equipment the contractor recommends.

With builders and remodelers, ask for the

materials list they recommend. Also, ask each for a list of completed projects. Be leery of very low bids. If a contractor can't pay for the proper materials, labor and overhead, your job might never see completion.

Think before you whip out your checkbook.

How many things in life do you pay for in advance? Not many. So, why should you pay a contracting job in full before anyone lifts a finger? Arrange to pay as work progresses and never pay more than 30% up front. Reserve 10% to be paid after the work is completed to your satisfaction. Ask the contractor to show you a lien release showing that the subcontractors and suppliers have been paid before paying the final 10%. And always ask the contractor to file the necessary permit with the city and to provide you with a copy. If he can't or won't, it could mean trouble.

Get it in writing.

A handshake is just not enough. Get a contract in writing that spells out start and finish dates, specific materials and cost, warranties and guarantees. Take your time, because you're going to live with the contractor's work for a long time. All sales people want you to make a swift decision. Be stubborn.

Can we talk?

If you're discussing a job with a contractor and feel like you're not communicating, you probably aren't. To some degree, let your instincts tell you if you can get along with your contractor. One caution. A salesperson who shows up at your door unannounced with a fabulous deal or an energy-saving innovation should be regarded with suspicion. Don't let the winning personality fool you.

In closing...

To avoid an unpleasant experience with Fritz, follow these easy steps:

- Call the Better Business Bureau.
- Call Building Services.
- Get references and call them to ask questions.
- See completed work.
- Get everything in writing.

