

Tips for Locating a Contractor

Your contractor **must be licensed** by the State of Minnesota or the State of Wisconsin. **You, and only you, will choose the contractor to perform the work on your home.** Select the contractor based on bids and investigational outcomes. We recommend getting more than one bid to ensure you receive competitive prices.

1. Here are some tips to assist you in locating a contractor:
 - Ask a neighbor, friend, or family member who has had work done. Neighborhood groups may have a list of contractors who have done good work in the past.
 - Major utilities are required to provide their customers with a list of contractors who have agreed to follow certain standards for energy improvements. Ask your utility supplier for a copy of the list.
 - Building supply stores, hardware stores, lumberyards, and other suppliers may be able to provide names of good contractors.
 - Trade associations can usually offer good referrals because their members must maintain good reputations.
 - Local directories or newspaper ads may provide information on contractors to contact as well as information about their specific improvement specialization.
 - Visit <https://abamn.org/consumers/find-a-professional/>
2. You should investigate the contractor before you hire him/her/them. Here are a few places to consult before you sign a contract:
 - Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry provides an online license lookup tool where a contractor's license status and any enforcement actions against a contractor can be found and verified. <https://secure.doli.state.mn.us/lookup/Licensing.aspx>
 - Contractor's references (former customers)
 - Better Business Bureau
 - Your City Hall
 - Minnesota Attorney General's Office
 - Materials dealers and trade associations
3. Prior to signing the contract with the contractor:
 - Get clear answers to all your questions before you sign the contract
 - Items covered in the contract should include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Complete cost breakdown
 - Specifications
 - Start and completion dates
 - Change order clauses
 - Schedule of payments
 - Liability
 - Contractor responsible for work performed by Subcontractors
 - Dispute resolution
 - Permits
 - Cancellation rights
 - Protection against liens
 - Cleanup of site
 - Guarantees and warranties

If you intend on doing the work yourself, submit a materials list directly from the vendor you are using. Your list must include the vendor name, item descriptions, and prices. For example, a Menards or Home Depot shopping cart is acceptable. Tools, appliances or anything that does not remain permanent to the home are not eligible items. Tool rental is acceptable. Give us a call if you have questions about what items are eligible.

