



*The District Attorney's
Disaster Response Team says:*

DON'T BE A VICTIM!

SCAM PREVENTION CHECKLIST

FOR HOME REPAIRS

- ✓ **Do not pay the entire cost of the job up front.**
- ✓ **Never pay cash.**
- ✓ **Get everything in writing**, with details on cost, work to be done, time schedules, guarantees, payment schedules, etc.
- ✓ **Demand references** and check them out. Verify contractor's name, address, and phone number. Beware of workers giving only pager numbers and post office box addresses. Write down contractor's license number and license plate number.
- ✓ **Never sign a contract with blanks** because unacceptable terms can be added later.
- ✓ **Ask an attorney or trusted friend to look over your contract** before you sign, and be sure to get a signed copy of the contract before work begins.
- ✓ **Never pay a contractor in full until the work is finished.** Don't sign anything saying work is completed until it's done.
- ✓ **Deal only with licensed and insured contractors.** Check them out with the Better Business Bureau, recent customers, Home Builders Association, insurance agents, and claims adjusters.

- ✓ **Get recommendations** from family, friends, and co-workers.
- ✓ **Get more than one estimate.** Don't automatically select the lowest bidder, and make sure you fully understand any price variations.
- ✓ **Verify that there is no cost for an estimate** before letting anyone into your home.
- ✓ **Beware of contractors urging you to spend a lot of money on temporary repairs** – make sure you have enough money for permanent repairs.

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CHECK OUT CONTRACTORS

Better Business Bureau
(800) 544-4714
(800) 824-5274

Home Builders Association of Alabama
(800) 745-4222

Home Builders Licensure Board
(800) 304-0853

REPORT SUSPECTED FRAUD

Mobile County District Attorney
(251) 574-8400

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The District Attorney's Disaster Response Team is a network of Mobile County's leading financial institutions, business and professional organizations, government agencies and law enforcement officials working together to help protect homeowners in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

We urge all our citizens to remain vigilant, to protect themselves against scams, and to report all suspected crime as we repair and rebuild Mobile County in the coming months.

-- District Attorney John M. Tyson Jr.