

Working with your contractor

Finding a contractor

- Work of mouth
- Site visits
- BBB (Better Business Bureau)
- Angie's List
- Home Advisor
- Neighborhood group

Checking their license

- CSLB.gov
 - Contractor's license number
 - Date of issue
 - Current status
 - Suspensions/revocations
 - Contractor's Bio
 - A license on display
 - Name of owner
 - Name of business
 - On vehicle
 - On business card

Assessing the contractor

- Provided a list of references
- Provides addresses of completed projects
- Status of license
- Willingness to pull permits

Contracting for the work

- **Get competitive bids (minimum of three)**
- **Develop a plan for work to be done (based on job complexity)**
 - **Owner develops**
 - **Hire a designer**
 - **Hire an architect**
 - **Hire an engineer**
- **Potential contractor develops a proposal**
 - **Details what work is to be done**
 - **Who will do the work**
 - **Use of sub-contractors**
 - **Schedule for work and completion**
 - **Costs**
 - **Fixed price**
 - **Labor, materials, & overhead**
 - **Payment schedule**
 - **(10% down payment typical)**
 - **Clear dates for progress payments**
 - **(Hold up to 10% pending final inspection)**

Permitting

- **Permit everything that affects the building codes**
 - **Heating, electrical, plumbing, etc.**
 - **Not needed for “like-for-like” replacements**
 - **Painting, carpets, trim, etc.**
 - **No contracted amount limits**
 - **In an incorporated municipality, go to the building department**
 - **In an unincorporated area go to the county building department**

- If owner pull the permits, owner directly pays the fees
- Some permits may be pulled online or by fax – plumbing, electrical, etc.

Valuation and due process

- Depending on the valuation of the project cost, do not have an appreciable increase in property tax
- Permits are legal documents showing what code applicable work is to be done on the property
- Permits should remain with the property (not the owner)
- Permit/inspections document conformance of the work to current building codes
- Permitted work may aid the resale of the property

Using “handyman services”

- Handyman services should be certified
- Maximum contracts should not exceed \$1,500.00

These notes are the educated opinion of the instructors and should not be considered legal opinions or accurate reflections of the laws of your municipality. When in doubt, always check with the local building department.