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# Avoid Home Repair Fraud

**Do get several bids.**

SAMPLE

* Try to get written bids or estimates from at least three different contractors. Check out the contractor.

## Get the contractor's full name, address and phone number.

* Ask for references and call them.
* Check with the Better Business Bureau and courthouse for criminal history and civil cases against the contractor.
* Be careful when dealing with contractors who have out-of-state license plates. Get it in writing.
* For repairs that cost more than $10,000, ask the contractor for a copy of their Certificate of Registration with the Texas Residential Construction Commission.

## Get a written contract.

* Specify the work to be done.
* Specify the price.
* Don't sign anything you don't understand.

## Control the money.

* Do not pay for the entire job up front.
* Try to pay as little as possible up front.
* It is against the law for contractors in disaster areas to take any money upfront unless they have a local office in your county or one county over for at least one year.
* Insist on waiting to pay the full amount until after the work is finished.
* You are protected by special rules if the contractor does not have a local office in your county or the next county over.
* Do not make the final payment until you have inspected the work. Make sure you are completely satisfied with the repairs.
* Do not pay in cash.

Report bad contractors to: Better Business Bureau; the Texas Attorney General; the local district attorney; and Lone Star Legal Aid.

**Lone Star Legal Aid - 1-866-659-0666 –** [**http://www.lonestarlegal.org**](http://www.lonestarlegal.org/)

SAMPLE

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## Placeholder for organization contact info – phone number – [website](http://www.google.com/)