



TOOLS & TIPS

CCB'S HOMEOWNER NEWSLETTER

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**Oregon Construction
Contractors Board**

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Winter rains have arrived - watch out for moisture damage!

In many parts of Oregon, winter rain has arrived. If you're struggling with leaks, CCB and other government agencies provide resources that can help.

If you need to hire a contractor for repairs, it's important to ensure that the contractor is properly licensed. In this newsletter, we'll connect you with resources, make you aware of some laws and rules that may help you, and teach you how to check a contractor's license.

Know your resources.

OHA's website states that "molds are fungi that grow in different shapes, sizes and colors. In nature molds break down dead and decaying material. In indoor environments, molds can cause structural damage because they consume and destroy the material they settle upon."

Water intrusion in your home can lead to mold growth. Mold inside your home can put your health at risk and may also lead to structural damage. If your home has mold, see these state and federal resources for more information.

- OHA, Mold In Your Home: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/HEALTHYNEIGHBORHOODS/TOXICSUBSTANCES/Pages/mold.aspx>
- EPA, Mold: <https://www.epa.gov/mold>



Hiring a contractor to repair a leak? Vet them first.

Before hiring a contractor to repair a roof leak, replace gutters or perform other home improvements, vet your contractor thoroughly.

- Get multiple bids.
- Verify their CCB license and look up their history of complaints on our license search: <http://search.ccb.state.or.us/search/>
- Call references.
- Get a contract for work over \$2,000. Read the contract thoroughly before signing. Contracts must include the Consumer Protection Notice, Notice of Procedure and Information Notice to Owner About Construction Liens.

Do you need a special license for mold remediation?

To conduct mold cleanup in Oregon, contractors must be licensed with the CCB. To ensure your contractor has experience with successful mold remediation, ask for references who hired the contractor to do similar work in their home. When contacting references, ask questions such as:

- What repairs or improvements did the contractor perform in your home?
- Was the contractor successful?
- What challenges did the contractor encounter during the home improvement, and what did they do to mitigate those challenges?
- Would you hire this contractor again, or recommend them to others?

Should your handyman be licensed?

Yes, a handyman performing work on your home for mold remediation or other repairs must be licensed with the CCB.

Where can I find my contractor's license number?

Contractors are required to put their CCB number on advertising, business cards, contracts and more. If you can't find your contractor's license, don't assume they have one. Ask for the license number, then verify it on the CCB's website: <http://search.ccb.state.or.us/search/> Here, you can confirm the license is active and that it belongs to the contractor you're hiring. You can also see the contractor's history of complaints or violations.

Call the CCB if you need help verifying a license at 503-378-4621.

Inspect Your Home Periodically

Inspect your home regularly for moisture intrusion and damage. OAR 812-012-0120 describes some signs of water damage including dampness, staining, mildewing (blackened surfaces with musty smell) and softness in wood members. The same rule also provides a home maintenance calendar.



Twice per year:

Check your home for any cracked or peeling caulking or weather-stripping around:

- Window sills
- Door frames
- Siding gaps
- Trim

Repair or replace if missing or damaged.

Every two months:

Check to make sure that interior mechanical ventilation systems are in good working order. Repair if necessary.

- Bathroom
- kitchen
- Utility room vent fans

Home Maintenance Schedule

At least once a year:

- Check roof for damaged, loose or missing shingles. Check flashing around roof stacks, vents, skylights, and chimneys and in roof valleys for missing or loose flashing. Repair or replace if necessary.
- Check for water stains in the roof of the attic and in the exterior overhangs or soffits. If water stains are present, locate and repair the cause of moisture intrusion.
- Check and repair missing mortar in exterior masonry.
- Check painted surfaces for cracking, peeling or fading. Repaint if necessary.
- Inspect gutters and downspouts for leaks. Repair if necessary. Check alignment of gutters, downspouts and splash blocks to ensure that water is properly diverted away from the structure and foundation. Repair if necessary.
- Inspect gutters for debris blockage. Remove debris (for example, tree needles and leaves) from downspouts and gutters.
- Check soil around foundation to make sure that it slopes in such a way that water can flow away from the foundation. Fill soil in any areas that have settled around the foundation.
- Trim back tree branches, shrubs and other plants to make sure they are not in contact with the structure.
- Check landscaping sprinklers to make sure that they are not set so that they will soak siding or form puddles near the foundation. Adjust if necessary.

CCB keeps a maintenance calendar on our website for your reference and convenience:
<https://www.oregon.gov/ccb/Documents/pdf/Maintenance%20Schedule%207-08.pdf>

If you're hiring a contractor to perform repairs to the systems named above, **check the license!** Call CCB if you have questions.

Know someone with home improvement projects? Tell them about our newsletter!

We've created this newsletter to reach homeowners around the state regarding issues they face when hiring a contractor. Spread the word about CCB's newsletter! If you know someone who could use advice about hiring a contractor, the link to our sign up is located at:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORCCB/subscriber/new>

View previous issues of the newsletter on our website:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ccb/news/Pages/Homeowner-Newsletters.aspx>