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Oregon Construction
Contractors Board

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Sign up for our newsletter



Winter is coming! Want to learn more about weatherizing in Oregon?

Join us for an informational webinar on October 29 put on by CCB and Clackamas County Housing & Community Development Division. During the presentation, we'll discuss:

What improvements or repairs can you do to improve your home's energy efficiency?

Can inspections help identify problem areas in your home? Can you inspect your own home to find opportunities for weatherizing?

Where are the hot spots for energy loss in the home?

How can you tell if your house has sufficient insulation?

After discussing weatherizing, we'll go over how hire a contractor for your weatherizing efforts. Experts from CCB will talk about how to check the license, how to avoid home improvement/unlicensed contractor scams, how to vet a contractor, and more. There will be opportunities for questions throughout the presentation.

When: October 29, 1:00 – 2:00 PM

To register, [click here!](#)

Door-to-Door Sales: What to Do When the Construction Project Comes to You

Door-to-door sales tactics are used in many industries, including in construction. As a homeowner, you may encounter a variety of door-to-door salespeople selling construction services.

Some of these salespeople may represent legitimate, honest contractors. Others may represent unlicensed and unscrupulous businesses. These businesses use high-pressure door-to-door sales tactics to push homeowners into unnecessary projects or home improvement scams.

It's important to remain vigilant when vetting and evaluating door-to-door services. Watch for the red flags below.

The salesperson...

Pushes you to act now. Good businesses give their customers time to consider before engaging in a major home improvement. Use caution if a salesperson makes you feel like you're going to miss out on a great deal by not acting now.

Pushes financing options. Always read the fine print when signing up for financing. Don't sign anything unless you'll be given an immediate copy. If you're going to borrow money for a home improvement project, do research and get a loan from an institution you trust.

Wants to enter your home to look at parts of your house. Don't let anyone into your house unless you feel comfortable allowing them to enter. Licensed contractors go through a rigorous background check. However, sometimes the person knocking on the door may be a contracted sales party has not been checked.

Wants to do the work now or right away. Reputable contractor businesses are typically booked weeks or months into the future and are not available to start work immediately. If the business wants to do the work right now, ask yourself why.



Has identified an urgent need for fast repairs.

Some scam artists inspect properties and identify problem areas they say need to be fixed quickly. Don't take one person's word for it – get a second opinion.

Says they have extra materials from a job they just finished down the street. They want to give you a deal. This is a common tactic used by paving scam artists.

The salesperson comes to your door saying they just finished a job down the street. They'll tell you they have leftover materials and they're happy to give you a deal if you're interested. If you agree, the team will get started right away. Often, the work stops in the middle when they discover "problems." This is when they raise the price. After pressuring you to pay more than the original agreed upon amount, the team may or may not finish the job. Sometimes under these scenarios, the work performed is visibly shoddy. Other times, the finished product looks fine, but washes away with the next rain.



KEY CONTACTS

Licensing questions:

503-378-4621

Report unlicensed activity:

503-934-2229

Dispute resolution

(mediation) questions:

503-934-2247

Education questions:

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Whether you're considering a service you learned about from door-to-door sales or finding contractors in other ways, these tips can help you make a smart decision when you're starting a home improvement project:

Do your homework. Door-to-door sales can spur activity in homeowners, making them feel like a construction project needs to happen urgently. Always do your homework before engaging in a home improvement. Vet multiple contractors before settling on a contractor for your project.

Get referrals. Talk to friends and family that have finished similar projects on their home in recent years. Did they have a good experience with their contractor? Would they hire that contractor again or refer that contractor to others? This information can help you decide who to hire – and who to stay away from.

Check the license. Always check the contractor's license on the [CCB's website](#) before starting a project. Hire a contractor with an active license. You'll be able to see up to 10 years of history on that contractor's license. Check for red flags like excessive complaints and unpaid construction debt. Be sure the license is in "Active Status"

Check references. Contact two or three references before starting a job. Ideally, the contractor will give you references for people who hired that contractor to do similar work on their house.

Talk to a family member or friend about your project. If you're the only person in your household, consider talking to a friend or family member about your upcoming construction project. Having a sounding board can help you make a good decision when hiring a contractor.

Know your goals. Know what you're hoping to accomplish with your home improvement. Make a list of goals and stick to them. Communicate these goals with your contractor before starting the job.

Get a contract. Always sign a thorough, well-written contract before starting a job. Contracts are required when the cost is over \$2,000, but CCB recommends contracts for smaller jobs as well. The contract should cover:

- Jobsite address
- Contractor's name and CCB number
- Homeowner's name and address
- Start date
- Thorough scope of work
- Payment terms including payment schedule and payment amount
- Change order information
- Permitting information
- Signatures of both parties

You have rights when it comes to door-to-door sales, including cancellation rights. Oregon's Department of Justice has explained these rights on [their website](#).

If you have any questions about looking up a contractor's license or interpreting the 10 years of history on a contractor's license, call CCB at 503-378-4621.

Home Hardening: What to Know

“Home hardening” refers to building materials and practices that can reduce the risk of ignition of a home by embers from wildfires. Home hardening and creating defensible space can reduce the possibility a nearby fire will ignite your structure. The Building Codes Division is applying home hardening building code standards to the high hazard areas within the wildland urban interface on the statewide wildfire hazard map.

What does this mean?

Homes that fall in a high hazard area in the wildland urban interface do not need to take retroactive action relating to home hardening. If you are in one of these areas and are 1) entirely replacing your home’s roof or siding, or 2) if you are completing an addition to your home, you will need to use fire home hardening materials after the wildfire hazard map is completed and the home hardening code provisions become effective statewide.

If you are not in a high hazard area or are outside of the wildland urban interface, no action is required related to home hardening.

How can I find out if I’m in a high hazard area in the wildland urban interface?

The Oregon Statewide Wildfire Hazard map is being finalized. Learn more about the map on [OSU's website](#).

How can I harden my home?

There are many things you can do to voluntarily harden your home. Some examples:

- Install ember- and flame-resistant vents or 1/8-inch maximum wire mesh
- Install Class A or Class B roof covering.
- Install noncombustible or ignition-resistant siding and trim.
- Install noncombustible gutters and guards or covers to prevent accumulation of leaves and debris.
- Install tempered, multi-layered, or fire-resistant rated glass.

Learn more about how you can harden your home on in this [Home Hardening document](#) from Building Codes Division. For questions about fire home hardening contact bcd.firehardening@dcbs.oregon.gov





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