

Tips for Hiring a Roofing Contractor

Roofing is a home improvement project you can undertake, but it can be more difficult than you might think. Hiring a roofing contractor will save a lot of time and energy in the long run. If your roof is of various angles and design, it is best to hire a roofing contractor, rather than tackle such a project by yourself.

Before you hire a roofing contractor, there are some things you should take into consideration:

- How long has the contractor been in business? There can be a high turnover rate in the roofing industry. There are many with a pickup truck and a ladder that present themselves as roofing contractors. Be sure to hire someone who has been operating for at least 25 to 30 years.
- Be sure the contractor has a truck with his name, telephone number and logo on it. Be sure he is a member in good standing of local professional organizations. In this area, that would be YBA (York Builders Assoc.), PBA (Pennsylvania Builders Assoc.), York County Chamber of Commerce, and the BBB (Better Business Bureau).
- Are the employees experienced roofers? Make sure the company hires skilled workers. Ask what training and qualifications they have.
- Does the contractor have proper insurance? Not just insurance, but proper insurance. It is absolutely critical that they have the necessary insurance. Be sure they have Roofers

Insurance.....NOT just Carpenters Insurance. There is a difference! A reputable, licensed roofing contractor will have the proper coverage. And will provide you with a copy of their Certificate of Insurance. If you aren't given a copy of their proof of insurance, ask for a copy. Remember, it protects him and any workers he may have on site, as well as you.

- Does the contractor sub-contract the roofing work to another? Sub-contractors need to have their own insurance coverage on their own Certificate of Insurance. Sub-contractors are not covered on the insurance policy of the roofing contractor. Lack of coverage or no coverage at all could result in unpaid losses to the customer, should a loss occur. Remember, sub-contractors are not employees of the roofing contractor and cannot be forced to comply with the contractors standards. In Pennsylvania, sub-contractors are considered individual entities and not an employee of the contractor.
- What kind of work does the contractor do? A cheaper job will skimp to cut corners. A good contractor will take the time to do everything the way it should be done. The workmanship will show in the end, good or bad.
- Can they provide a list of references? Once you

have the references in hand, call them.

- Can the roofing contractor make recommendations on what materials will work best for your project? A professional keeps up-to-date on the latest products? Experience counts!
- Make sure they put everything in writing. A professional provides customers with written contracts.
- How soon can the work be done? If the contractor can begin immediately, beware of this. Good roofing contractors are busy most of the year and have a waiting period. The exception would be if your situation is of an emergency nature.
- How much do they charge? Getting the lowest price should NOT be your first consideration. You want to get someone with skill, experience, insurance, awareness of safety issues, and good workers. That will not likely be the guy with the lowest bid. It doesn't need to be the highest bid either. Just be sure **not** to hire on price alone. Look at the whole picture. Roofers operate on very tight profit margins. And remember, if the price seems too good to be true, however, it probably is.

In summary, look at the whole picture. Longevity, experience, and reputation are very important in choosing a roofing contractor.