

Contractor Scam Tips

Here are some helpful tips from the California Contractors State License Board ([CSLB](https://www.cslb.ca.gov)) on scams involving contractors:

- Always verify that a contractor is licensed through the California State License Board at [cslb.ca.gov](https://www.cslb.ca.gov) or by calling 800-321-2752. Then, verify that your contractor has a photo ID that matches the name on their license.
- Receive three bids for the service in writing – if one quote is significantly cheaper than the others, that could be a red flag. Ask for references and check them.
- Unlicensed contractors will ask for a large down payment. According to California law, down payments must be no more than 10 percent or \$1,000, whatever is less.
- Be wary of door-to-door sales and pressure tactics. If you did not initiate the contact, ask that they leave a card so you can research the company. Do not let someone you do not know into your home, especially when they say they can provide a free inspection.
- Don't feel pressured to make a decision. Tell the contractor that you are getting at least three bids.
- Always get a written contract. Be cautious with an electronic contract, it can be modified after you sign. You must be given a written copy of the contract signed by you and the contractor before work begins. In the contract, include a process payment schedule, identification of subcontractors and material suppliers so you can ensure they have been paid, and start and completion dates. Get any change orders in writing, signed by both the homeowner and contractor. **Read the contract carefully.** If a contractor is pressuring you to sign now, that is a red flag.
- Keep a record of all of your payments. Scammers may try to trick you saying you never paid a certain bill. Keep your own records so you can verify.
- Is solar right for you? Visit [cslb.ca.gov/consumers/solar_smart/](https://www.cslb.ca.gov/consumers/solar_smart/) for information you should consider before installing a residential solar energy system.

For more contractor scam tips from the City of Rancho Palos Verdes, visit: [rpvca.gov/1746/Contractor-Scam-Alerts](https://www.rpvca.gov/1746/Contractor-Scam-Alerts)