



# NSCB News Release



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## **CONTRACTORS BOARD WARNS CARPENTER FIRE VICTIMS OF UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS FREQUENTING NEIGHBORHOODS**

**HENDERSON, Nev.** – In response to the Carpenter Fire that destroyed some homes and caused damage to other dwellings around the Mount Charleston area, the Nevada State Contractors Board (NSCB) is warning affected homeowners to be cautious of unlicensed contractors who will likely begin frequenting neighborhoods soliciting repair/rebuild work. Any person who comes into contact with an unlicensed contractor is encouraged to obtain as much information on the individual as possible and contact the Unlicensed Contractor Hotline at (702) 486-1160.

Due to the emergent need to rebuild or repair homes and businesses in the Mount Charleston area, NSCB is informing homeowners of various schemes that may occur by unlicensed contractors and offering tips on how to hire licensed contractors.

“Our sympathies go out to all affected home and business owners in the Mount Charleston area,” said Margi A. Grein, executive officer of NSCB. “We know these are stressful and urgent times for all who have been impacted, which is why the Contractors Board will be out in the community answering questions, providing information to residents, and keeping an eye out for unlicensed contracting activities.”

### **UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR SCHEMES – COMMON RED FLAGS**

- *Door-to-Door Solicitations* – Contractors may come to the door immediately surveying damage and selling their services on-the-spot at a “too good to be true” price.
- *Verbal Agreements* – Contractors may say that a written contract is unnecessary.

- *High Pressure Sales* – Contractors may push for an immediate decision about work and may not allow the homeowner time to verify the contractor’s license number, obtain multiple bids, or check contractor references.
- *Demands for Cash Payment* – Contractors may insist on cash payments, even offering to drive/follow the homeowner to the bank to obtain the funds.
- *Demands for Large Down Payment* – Contractors may say that they need the majority of the funds up front to purchase supplies and pay workers prior to any work being performed. As a general rule of thumb, it is best not to pay more than ten percent down and not let payments get ahead of the work.

## **TIPS FOR HIRING LICENSED CONTRACTORS**

1. **Always hire a licensed contractor to receive the utmost protections.**
2. Ask for the contractor’s license number and verify it on NSCB’s website: [www.nscb.nv.gov](http://www.nscb.nv.gov). If you do not have access to the Internet, you can verify licensure by calling NSCB’s office at (702) 486-1100.
3. Obtain at least three bids prior to making your decision.
4. Ask for references from each contractor and follow up with them to verify the quality and timeliness of the work previously performed for those customers.
5. Make sure your contract is as detailed as possible, including type/color of materials, payment schedules, etc.
6. Never sign a contract until you understand all the terms and agreements.
7. Always obtain a receipt when payment is made. It is advised never to pay in cash – only check or credit card.
8. Request lien releases after each phase of the project is complete.
9. Don’t let the payments get ahead of the work.
10. Report any suspicious activities to the Contractors Board at (702) 486-1160.

It is a criminal offense to contract without a license in the State of Nevada. The first offense is a misdemeanor, second offense is a gross misdemeanor, and the third offense is a Class E felony.

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