



NSCB News Release



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RENO RESIDENTS DAMAGED BY FLOOD URGED TO CAREFULLY VET REPAIR CONTRACTORS

RENO, Nev. – The Nevada State Contractors Board cautions Reno-area residents whose homes have been damaged by severe flooding to be vigilant when hiring repair contractors.

“In the desire to get things fixed as quickly as possible and return to their normal routines, homeowners may forget the importance of ensuring contractors are licensed,” notes Contractors Board Executive Officer Margi Grein. “Unscrupulous and unlicensed contractors often prey on disaster victims who are understandably anxious after severe weather causes damage.”

The first concern must be residents’ personal safety. Flood can compromise a home’s foundation, floors and framing, provide environments where mold can thrive and cause other damage not readily apparent. Before initiating any flood damage repair, residents should first contact their homeowner’s insurance agent to file a claim. The agent and adjuster can explain what repairs are covered under the policy and provide an estimated timeline for repairs to be made to the home. Request a list of contractors your insurance provider approves, and verify they are appropriately licensed.

Homeowners seeking repairs on their own should always hire licensed contractors and verify the contractor’s license on the Board’s website: www.nscb.nv.gov or by calling the Board’s office at 775-688-1141. Contractors must possess a valid Nevada contractor’s license in order to accept any job with a value of \$1,000 or more, including labor and materials. In addition, any job requiring a building permit and any electrical, plumbing, heating, or air conditioning job must be performed by a licensed contractor.

State-licensed contractors have passed appropriate trade competence and legal knowledge exams, have undergone a thorough criminal background check and established their financial wherewithal. But if something does go wrong, hiring only licensed contractors ensures homeowners receive the full protections the Contractors Board offers. If workmanship issues arise with a licensed contractor, homeowners can file a complaint with the Board within four years of the date the work is performed.

When searching for a contractor, the Contractors Board advises homeowners to take additional steps to protect themselves:

- Ask friends, family and neighbors for the names of contractors they have used and trust, but be sure to verify they maintain an active license by the Contractors Board.

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- Obtain several bids to compare costs for service and select the contractor that best meets your needs.
- Insist on written contracts that detail the work to be done, the exact materials to be used, start and completion dates, warranties and the amount and timing of payments.
- Be skeptical of unsolicited offers to perform repair work, free inspections and “today-only” or “too-good-to-be-true” deals using leftover materials.
- Never pay with cash or let your payments exceed the value of work completed.

To report unlicensed contracting activity, call the NSCB Hotline: 775-850-7838.

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