



Building Services Authority

MEDIA RELEASE

12 November 2007

Helpful advice for the older builder or renovator

Are you an older person? Are you thinking of building or renovating? If so, read on for useful tips to protect you against getting burnt when investing in your most valuable asset, your home.

“The BSA wants to ensure older people are protected against predatory unlicensed building contractors when having building work performed on their home. The following tips will help,” said BSA’s general manager, Ian Jennings.

Mr Jennings advises all people, but particularly older people, to use the following guidelines when looking to have building or renovating work performed on their home.

When choosing a contractor older people should follow five simple steps.

1. Using the Yellow Pages, newspaper ads and referrals from friends and family, find local contractors that are willing and able to do the job.
2. Make sure the contractor is licensed by asking to see their BSA licence card.
3. Write down the contractor’s licence details and double-check them with BSA (call 1300 BSA BSA, or visit www.bsa.qld.gov.au) to make sure the licence is current and appropriate for the work you want performed.
4. Get at least three written quotes from contractors and remember that the cheapest is not always the best.
5. Ask the contractor for details of past work they have done and speak with their previous clients.

Once you have chosen a contractor older people should:

- Ensure all details of your agreement with the contractor are *written down* in a contract (or in a detailed written quote if a small job) and that you have a copy.
- Make sure the contractor gives you copies of all documents supporting the contract, including plans and specifications, soil tests etc.
- Monitor the contractor’s work carefully and advise the contractor immediately of problems, both verbally and in writing.
- Never pay the full amount up front, don’t pay too big a deposit, don’t pre-pay or over-pay the agreed progress payments and never pay for incomplete work.
- Always check the work fully before making your final payment.
- Don’t rush into a decision. Take time and seek advice. The *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000* gives you a “cooling-off” period of five business days to consider your decision and change your mind.

“Your home is likely to be your greatest investment so be very careful who you hire to work on it as this decision can determine whether the project runs like a dream or a nightmare.”

“If you have any questions about building or renovating, or find yourself in dispute with a contractor, please contact BSA on 1300 272 272.”

299 Montague Rd, SOUTH BRISBANE 4101

POSTAL ADDRESS: PRIVATE MAIL BAG 84, COORPAROO D.C. QLD 4151

MEDIA CONTACTS: Justin Coomber 3404 3027, 0407 130 287, Justin.Coomber@bsa.qld.gov.au
Heidi Jones 3225 2996, Heidi.Jones@bsa.qld.gov.au