

HOME REPAIR DO'S & DON'TS AFTER THE STORM

Some Construction Contracting Do's and Don'ts

- **DO** ask to see the contractor's license and make sure it matches the person showing it;
- **DO** determine how long the contractor has been in business;
- **DO** contact the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (1-850-487-2252) or www.myflorida.com to verify the current status of the license;
- **DO** ask for references and check them out;
- **DO** choose several contractors and get estimates from each; and
- **DO** get the agreement in writing – read the contract, fill in all the blank spaces, make sure it contains the contractor's name, address, telephone number, license number, description of the work, completion date, and any warranty agreements.

- **DON'T** hire a contractor who requires advance payment – arrange to pay upon completion or in installments;
- **DON'T** sign the work completion certificate until all the work is satisfactorily completed;
- **DON'T** pay cash; and
- **DON'T** pull the construction permits.

Watch Out for Scams!

Victims of Natural Disasters should take care not to be victimized a second time – by unscrupulous adjusters, contractors or retailers.

Verify that an adjuster is licensed by calling **1-800-227-8676**.

Consumers should verify that a FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) or SBA (Small Business Administration) representative has a laminated photo ID card. A FEMA or SBA jacket or shirt is not proof of an affiliation.

"The price-gouging statute does not forbid making a profit but it does forbid profiteering."

Consumers can check if a contractor is licensed at www.myfloridalicense.com.

Any suspected fraud or price gouging can be reported to the State Attorney General's office at **1-866-966-7226**.

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This brochure is for general education only. It is not intended to be used to solve individual problems. If you have specific questions, see an attorney.

For more information, you can contact:

Legal Aid Service of Broward County, Inc. at 954/765-8950 or

Coast to Coast Legal Aid of South Florida, Inc. at 954/765-8955