

What You Should Know About Hiring a Remodeler

Home Builders Association Remodelers Council

With the ongoing challenging economy, many families are choosing to remodel their homes to fit their changing needs, rather than selling their home and buying another one. Your home is likely your largest investment, and even simple remodels can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars, so you want to make sure you find a contractor you can trust.

Here are some important considerations to ensure you make the right decisions when you find, evaluate and hire a remodeler.

The best place to start is the Membership Directory of Professional Remodelers at www.hbaswil.org. A professional remodeler will uphold the highest professional and ethical standards in the industry. These sources can also help you find a remodeler who specializes in a specific type of remodeling if you need it, such as a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) to help modify your home to better suit you as you age, or a Certified Graduate Remodeler (CGR) that has extensive training in this particular part of the industry.

Ask local independent trade contractors, building materials suppliers, architects, engineers, home inspectors, lenders and insurance professionals for recommendations.

Once you have a list of potential home remodelers for your project, do research to verify that they are appropriately licensed and have a good business track record. Look them up with your local or state office of consumer protection and the local Better Business Bureau, as well as with your state's licensing agency and the state and local building inspectors. Verify that the remodeler has the appropriate licenses and registrations, and see if they have received any complaints about the remodeler and if so, were those complaints resolved satisfactorily?

When you begin meeting with remodelers, you want to find out information such as:

- How long they have been in business in your community? Can they provide references from customers and suppliers they work with?
- Do they carry insurance that protects you from claims arising from property damage or job site injuries? Ask for a copy of the insurance certificates.
- Do they arrange for the building permit?
- Do they provide a written estimate before beginning the work, and a detailed contract that spells out the work that will and will not be performed, protects both of you, provides a fair payment schedule contract and complies with local, state, and federal laws?
- Do they offer a warranty? What is covered under the warranty and for how long?

Contact the Home Builders Association of Greater Southwest Illinois for names of remodeler members by visiting our website at www.hbaswil.org or call (618) 343-6331. You can also follow us on facebook at www.facebook.com/hbaswil