

Five Consumer Mistakes When Hiring a Contractor

A successful building or remodeling project requires careful planning and attention to detail. Below are the top five most common mistakes made in a construction project:

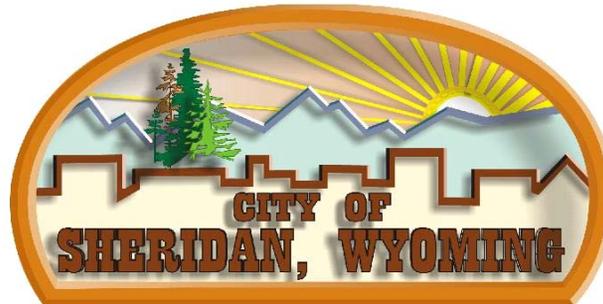
1. Automatically accepting the lowest bid. The old saying, "you get what you pay for," generally applies here. A higher bid may be worth the price in better materials, workmanship, and reliability.
2. No written contract. A written contract protects you and the contractor. It is recommended that all agreements, including all changes to the original contract, be in writing.
3. Not checking the contractor's license. It is a City of Sheridan ordinance (law) that contractors must be licensed to conduct work within the City limits. A license is required for any contractor that constructs, alters, moves, enlarges, repairs, repairs or demolishes a structure. Replacement, repair or maintenance of equipment or changing the use or occupancy of a building may also require a licensed contractor.
4. Not checking references. Check with previous customers. Were they satisfied with the work? Was the work finished within a reasonable time frame? Did the contractor return phone calls? If the person had problems with the contractor's work, ask how the contractor responded to complaints. Look at examples of the contractor's work.
5. Not doing the homework. Plan your project carefully. Consider your budget. Find pictures of styles and products, write down brand names and models. Show them to your contractor. "High quality faucets" or "ivory paint" may mean something different to you and your contractor. Walk with your contractor through a finished project and explain what you like and don't like. Get accurate plans or blueprints and make sure then show your project accurately.

Be sure to verify that your
contractor is licensed.

Contact the City of Sheridan
Building Inspection Division

307-674-5941

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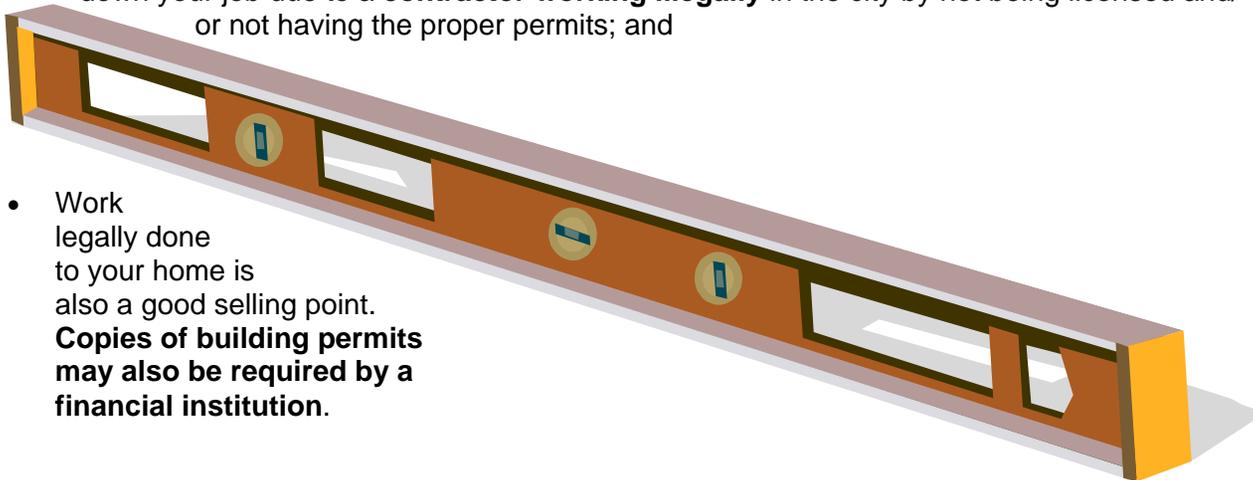
Why Hire a Licensed Contractor?

*Not everyone is
who they say
they are!*

City of Sheridan
Building Department
Tel: 307-674-5941

Is Your Contractor On The Level?

- If a contractor is actively licensed, it means that **they have a surety bond and liability insurance and have been approved by the City of Sheridan Building Official** (for additional contractor licensing requirements, go to the City of Sheridan website at www.city-sheridan-wy.com).
- **A contractor is required to be licensed to obtain permits**; the contractor submits plans (when required) and signs the permit making them responsible for any property damage or bodily injury the contractor may cause;
- **A licensed contractor would know when permits are required to do work in the city limits.** When permits are issued, the City of Sheridan Building Inspection Division will inspect the work to verify the work is being done to meet code requirements (**permits are required for any construction—including but not limited to decks, porches, awnings, new buildings, alterations, additions, garages and shops with a valuation of a \$1000 or more**);
- It provides protection for you in the future. Should you sell your home, the permits and inspection results help protect **YOU** should a problem arise with the work done to the home while you owned it;
- It may prevent a delay in your project being completed should a **“Stop Work Order”** shut down your job due to a **contractor working illegally** in the city by not being licensed and/or not having the proper permits; and
- Work legally done to your home is also a good selling point. **Copies of building permits may also be required by a financial institution.**



The Consequences of Hiring Unlicensed Contractors

If you hire an **unlicensed contractor**, here are *just a few* problems you are likely to encounter:

- **STOP WORK ORDER** posted on your job.
- Work completed is likely to be **SUBSTANDARD** and will have to be **REDONE**.
- You will need to hire a **LICENSED CONTRACTOR** to permit and complete your work.
- Financial institutions often require copies of building permits **prior to providing financing for home loans**.

