

IMPORTANT

An Occupational License is **not** a license to perform contracting work. A Handyman is not a licensed contractor and **cannot** obtain permits.

Homeowners who hire unlicensed contractors face several potentially costly penalties. The Department of Business and Professional Regulation can issue an order to stop construction and can levy a \$5,000.00 fine for aiding and abetting unlicensed contractors.

**Hiring qualified, licensed
contractors is not just a good
idea,
It's the law !!!**

*“Earning Community Confidence
Through Excellence In Service”*

05/2005



*Lake County
Department Of Growth Management
Building Services Division*

Protect Yourself!

Avoid Unlicensed Contractors



Tavares Office
315 West Main St. Phone (352) 343-9653
Tavares, Florida 32778 Fax (352) 343-9661
Clermont Office
685-B West Montrose St. Phone (352) 394-5962
Clermont, Florida 34711 Fax (352) 394-0197

Reach Us On The Web
www.lakegovernment.com

Lake County is committed to protecting its residents from unlicensed contractor activities.

Lake County has a licensing investigator and has adopted an ordinance that enables the investigator to write citations and impose fines against unlicensed activity.

WORKING WITHOUT THE PROPER LICENSE IS AGAINST THE LAW.

Be aware of what can happen if you hire an unlicensed contractor. If the work does not meet code standards there is no recourse against the unlicensed contractor, other than through civil courts.

If the contractor is licensed, you may file a complaint with the Lake County Building Services Division. The code violations will be investigated.

REMEMBER THAT NO LICENSE MEANS NO RECOURSE THROUGH LAKE COUNTY.

You may call Lake County Building Services Division to check if the person is licensed or if there are complaints against the license. We are available by telephone between 8:30 and to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Tavares (352) 343-9653

Clermont (352) 394-5962

COMPLAINTS AGAINST UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS WILL BE INVESTIGATED!

Early Warning Signs Of An Unlicensed Contractor

- 1. A large down payment is requested before work begins.**
In order to be licensed, contractors must demonstrate financial stability.
- 2. Numerous requests for money during early phases of construction.**
As in number 1, the contractor should be financially solvent.
- 3. You are asked to obtain the permit.**
A licensed contractor who is in good standing will always obtain the permit.
- 4. Verbal contract only. The contractor is not willing to put all terms in writing.**
If the contractor does not have workman's compensation insurance, the homeowner may be liable if the contractor or his employees are injured on their property.
- 5. The contractor does not have proof of insurance.**
Licensed contractors must have general liability and worker's compensation insurance in force at all times.
- 6. You are informed that the job does not require a permit or inspection.**
Check with your local building department. Almost all projects, except for minor repairs, require a permit.
- 7. The contractor is only willing to work on weekends or after hours.**
This is often a sign that the person is "moonlighting" without a license. Licensed contractors are full-time men and women.
- 8. Someone obtains the permit other than the person or company contracted to do the work.**
See number 3.
- 9. Contractor displays only an occupational license.**
In order to lawfully engage in contracting, a contractor must be either state registered or certified, or locally licensed.
- 10. You are asked to make checks payable to an individual's name or "cash" or to make cash payments.**
Licensed contractors will always have a separate business account.
- 11. Newspaper, flyers, yellow page ads or business cards display only the telephone number appears.**
Licensed contractors are required to include the state license number in all advertising.

Lake County has adopted the following fines for the listed Violations:

Engaging in the business or acting in the capacity of being a contractor or advertising himself/herself or a business organization as available to engage in the business or act in the capacity of a contractor without being duly licensed or registered.

1st Offense \$250.00
2nd Offense \$500.00

Willfully or deliberately disregard or violate any municipal or county ordinance relating to unlicensed or unregistered contractors.

1st Offense \$250.00
2nd Offense \$500.00

Commence or perform work for which a building permit is required without such building permit in effect.

1st Offense \$150.00
2nd Offense \$300.00

Falsely hold himself or a business organization out as a licensee, local licensed or local registration holder.

1st Offense \$150.00
2nd Offense \$300.00
3rd Offense \$500.00

Present as his own, the local license or local registration of another.

1st Offense \$200.00
2nd Offense \$400.00
3rd Offense \$500.00



HELPFUL HINTS:

- **Ask Questions**
- **Be Nosy**
- **Make Sure** that your contractor has a license from Lake County Building Services Division or the Department of Business and Professional Regulation.