

Take care in picking a contractor

The New Jersey Remodelers Association booklet offers these tips:

- Make sure the contractor has an established place of business. Get a phone number and be wary of those who give only a post office

- Get at least two estimates on jobs that cost more than \$1,000. Have a fair idea of what you want done and specify brand names.

- Give each contractor the same specifications so you can compare prices.

- Be suspicious of bids that are unrealistically low.

- Don't be misled by contractors who advertise license numbers, unless they are electricians, plumbers or architects. Remodeling contractors are not licensed by the state.

- Do not pay in full for any work in advance.

- Be sure the contractor's guarantee covers workmanship and materials. A manufacturer's warranty is not enough.