

# Quick Tips

[www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) | [CheckTheLicenseFirst.com](http://CheckTheLicenseFirst.com) | [SeniorScamStopper.com](http://SeniorScamStopper.com)



The Contractors State License Board, which operates under the umbrella of the California Department of Consumer Affairs, licenses and regulates California's 300,000 contractors, and is regarded as one of the leading consumer protection agencies in the United States.

## ONLINE BULLETIN BOARD SAFETY

Before agreeing to hire anyone for construction or home improvement work from an Internet bulletin board or online directory, CSLB reminds consumers to always follow these proactive tips:

- Check the license number that is listed in a contractor's advertisement on CSLB's website or call to make sure it is valid and in good standing at:
  - [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov)
  - [www.CheckTheLicenseFirst.com](http://www.CheckTheLicenseFirst.com)
  - CSLB Mobile on your Smart device
  - 800-321-CSLB (2752)

Be aware of these state contracting laws:

- All Internet advertising for home improvement or contracting work must include a CSLB-issued contractor license number. The contractor license number also is required on all other forms of advertising, including print, electronic, and promotional items, and on the written contract.
- Anyone who performs construction work that costs \$500 or more (combined labor and materials) must be state-licensed in California for the specific trade that is being performed.
- Contractors cannot request more than 10% or \$1,000 for the down payment, whichever is less. (There is an exception for about two dozen licensees who carry special bonds to protect consumers. These exceptions are noted on CSLB's website.)
- Contractors who use employees or workers must be covered by a valid workers' compensation insurance policy. If not, the property owner could be liable for mishaps.

CSLB recommends that consumers:

- Only hire state-licensed contractors and ask to see their license and a photo ID to verify their identity.
- Get at least three bids, three references, and review past work.
- Don't pay in cash.
- Keep a project file with all paperwork related to your project, including all payments.
- Don't let payments get ahead of the work, and don't make the final payment until you are satisfied with the job.

If a problem occurs with your project and you are unable to resolve it with your contractor, use CSLB's online complaint form at: <http://www.cslb.ca.gov/Resources/FormsAndApplications/ConsumerComplaintForm.pdf>