

How to Select a Reputable Roofing Company or Roofing Contractor

Buying a new roofing system is an important investment. Price is NOT king when buying a new roof - you do not want to hire a questionable company to install a cheap roof. The company could disappear tomorrow and a cheap roof will come with a cheap warranty. Keep a healthy skepticism about the lowest bid. Before you invest your money, you need to invest some time evaluating roofing contractors.

The **National Roofing Contractors Association** (NRCA) offers advice for selecting a roofing company/contractor. You can read the NRCA guidelines on their Web site (<http://www.nrca.net/consumer/fyi.aspx>).

Here is a check list to help you select a professional roofing company or contractor:

Company Stability

Check for a permanent place of business and telephone number. When you call do you get to speak with a person or is voicemail your only option? Does the company have a good Web site with their permanent business address listed? Do they have any press releases indicating current activity?

Insurance Coverage

Do not hesitate to ask a roofing company or contractor for proof of insurance. Ask about liability coverage and workers' compensation certificates. Make sure the coverages are in effect through the duration of your roofing project. Many homeowners have been dragged into litigation involving uninsured roofing contractors. If a contractor is not properly insured, you may be liable for accidents and injuries that occur on your property.

Customer References

Look for a roofing company with a proven track record that offers client references and a list of completed projects. Ask for recent references and for references over 2-3 years old. Call at least two of these customers to find out whether they were satisfied – most people will be happy to speak with you. You can also check to see if there are any references on Google Maps or Angie's List.

Check the Better Business Bureau

A good roofing contractor will be a member of the BBB. Read the BBB references - make sure the company has not had unresolved complaints.

Roofing Materials

Check to see if the roofing company uses a nationally known manufacturer. Good roofing materials come with a good warranty - ask for complete warranty information, both on roofing materials and on labor/installation. Do not be afraid of contacting the manufacturer to ask about their roofing materials, the roofing company or the contractor.

Estimates on a Roofing System

Any good roofing contractor will come to your house to give you a free estimate - it is a standard part of the job. When the company representative comes to your house, does he pressure you or try to upsell you? Did he pester you after the initial estimate? A good company with a solid reputation will do a good job of "selling," but will not pressure you.

Get a Written Proposal

Insist on a detailed, written proposal and examine it for complete descriptions of the work and specifications, including approximate starting and completion dates and payment procedures. Make sure the roofing materials are specified to ensure the warranty on your project.

A roofing system is an important capital investment, protecting your house or building against the elements. A good roof can also help you resell the property. Take the time to make a good choice – a good roof will pay future dividends.

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