



District Attorney's Office • 18th Judicial District
George H. Brauchler, District Attorney • Arapahoe, Douglas, Elbert & Lincoln Counties

Consumer Alert

Be Wary of Traveling Contractors This Spring

As with the flowers and buds, this is the time of year when fraudulent door-to-door home and landscape contractors begin making an appearance. The first hints of spring and stormy weather are ominous signs that these hucksters are in the vicinity. One of the most common complaints that come through the District Attorney's Consumer Line are from victims who have been scammed by itinerant roofers who take the money up front and don't return to do the work. Or, they do shoddy work that ultimately costs the homeowner significantly more in repairs. The recent catastrophic wildfires in fire-prone communities have also resulted in complaints about alleged traveling contractors and insurance adjusters.

The best prevention is anticipating ahead of time what to do if hail or fire damages the home, landscaping or trees. Knowing this in advance will save unnecessary anguish down the road. The following are important tips that will minimize your risk of being taken by an untrustworthy contractor:

- Think twice before doing business with door-to-door contractors.
- Get more than one bid for costly repairs.
- Check the contractor out with your county building department. In most municipalities, contractors must be licensed in order to pull a permit to do the work. They must also have a permit to solicit door-to-door.
- For structural repairs, check your homeowner's insurance policy to know what is included in your policy, and get a list of approved contractors from your agent.
- Run a business reliability report with the Better Business Bureau. The BBB keeps reports on both member and non-member businesses. You can also check the list for accredited BBB contractors at www.bbb.org
- The International Society of Arboriculture – Rocky Mountain Chapter is a good resource for finding a certified arborist at <https://www.isarmc.org>.
- Have a signed contract that contains a specific start and end date, and read through it carefully before signing. Also, make sure to sign a lien waiver when the work is done.

DA – 18th Consumer Protection Line: 720-874-8547