



BUILD IT BACK GREEN

Tips for Hiring a Contractor



Finding a contractor – Choosing the right contractor can save time & money.

- Ask friends and trusted associates who have already hired contractors for recommendations
- Check potential contractors out with consumer protection groups, such as the Better Business Bureau: www.neworleans.bbb.org or 504-581-6222. BBB's video, *How to hire a contractor*, can be purchased from their online resource library.
- Ask for proof that potential contractors are licensed with the State of Louisiana, and verify with the State Licensing Board: www.lslbc.louisiana.gov/findcontractor.asp or (225) 765 2301
- Ask potential contractors about their familiarity and experience with energy efficient, environmentally responsible, and healthy building practices and materials.

Hiring a contractor

- Once you have found a licensed contractor who checks out with the BBB or another consumer protection group, ask for:
 - A list of references, particularly of projects similar to yours – **and check them.**
 - Lists of subcontractors and suppliers and check to make sure they pay their debts on time.
 - Proof of current insurance (should include General Liability, Worker's Compensation and Builder's Risk). Make sure to obtain an insurance binder with you listed as the additional insured from the insurance company before signing a contract.
- The contract should be modeled after standard American Institute of Architect's (AIA) construction contract. Contract templates can be purchased at www.aianeworleans.org.
- Before signing the contract, make sure you understand the terms and conditions. If necessary, ask an attorney, or a neutral party familiar with the construction process to advise you.

Payment

- Ten percent (10%) of the contract is the most a legitimate contractor will request for a deposit.
- Payment should proceed according to the contract. Pay only for what is completed.
- Do not pay in cash and keep written records of all payments
- Keep written records of paperwork, conversations and activities, including photographs of work completed.
- Changes to the scope of work should be estimated and approved by the contractor and you in writing before they are begun.
- Do not make final payment until all work is completed to your satisfaction, all subcontractors and suppliers are paid, and the jobsite is clean and cleared of all debris.