

As Storm Season Approaches, Watch Out For Unregistered Roofers

Springtime is upon us in Kansas, which also means the spring storms are heading our way. Living in Kansas, the possibility of severe weather means there is also the possibility of damage occurring to our homes.

When the storms hit, it is common for out-of-area, traveling contractors to roll into a damaged town looking to make a quick buck. To help combat this, the Legislature in 2013 passed a law requiring roofing contractors to register with the attorney general's office. The program has been successful, with nearly 1,100 roofers currently registered and in good standing to operate in Kansas.

If your roof is damaged in a spring storm – or if you're just looking to have some work done on your roof this spring – it's important to make sure the roofing contractor you use is properly registered with the attorney general's office. Ask the roofer to provide you a copy of their current roofing registration certificate, and go to our website at www.InYourCornerKansas.org to check the current registration list to make sure the contractor is in good standing. Many city and county governments also require permits before doing work, so make sure your roofer has complied with all local ordinances as well.

Here are some more tips to help keep you safe from home repair scams:

- If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Get multiple written bids on home improvement projects to ensure quotes are reasonable and competitive.
- Ask for local references. Working with a well-known, reputable local contractor will help prevent becoming a victim of a fly-by-night operator who won't be around if you have problems later.
- Friends, family and neighbors are the best sources for recommendations.
- Be sure your contractor is insured. The contractor should have personal liability, property damage and worker's compensation insurance for workers and subcontractors. Also check with your insurance company to find out if you are covered for any injury or damage that might occur.

Most importantly, document everything in writing. Insist on a contract that states exactly what work will be done, the quality of materials that will be used, warranties, timetables, the names of any subcontractors, the total price of the job, and the schedule of payments. Don't make a final payment or sign a final release until you are satisfied with the work and know that subcontractors and suppliers have been paid.

For more tips on staying safe from home repair scams or to file a complaint, visit our consumer protection website at www.InYourCornerKansas.org or call our consumer protection hotline at (800) 432-2310.