

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

1001 Sarasota Center Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34240

4000 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice, FL 34293

941-861-5000

Did You Know?

LOCAL BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT

DID YOU KNOW?

- A LOCAL BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT is not a license at all. It is non-regulatory tax by which a local government grants the privilege of engaging in or managing any business, profession, or occupation.
- A LOCAL BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT is non-regulatory and can be revoked only if doing business with Cuba, or upon the revocation of a local or State license issued by governmental agencies (examples: Contractor, Physician, Cosmetologist, Realtor).
- A person who holds a LOCAL BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT as a “HANDYMAN” cannot perform any phases of construction. They can only perform work such as: rescreening, tile, carpet and linoleum installation, changing door locks and light bulbs, cleaning gutters, window tinting and painting.

CONTRACTOR LICENSING

DID YOU KNOW?

- If you buy WINDOWS from a business, they cannot offer the installation without holding a CONTRACTOR LICENSE in their respective field. A separate contract must be drawn between the Installer and the homeowner unless the business is QUALIFIED AND LICENSED as a contractor.
- Sarasota County requires all applicants for CONTRACTOR LICENSES to take a trade exam and a business and law exam. Financial responsibility is also assessed.
- A person that performs contracting without being licensed as a contractor can be charged with a 1st degree misdemeanor for the 1st offense and a 3rd degree felony for any offense after being found guilty of unlicensed contracting.
- Contracting without a license during a STATE OF EMERGENCY is a felony in the third degree.
- Complaints against UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS should be reported to the Department of Business Professional Regulation (www.myfloridalicense.com) AND the Sheriff’s Office. They are not a civil matter.
- All CONTRACTOR LICENSES can be differentiated from a BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT by the prefix. The BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT consists of numbers only. CONTRACTOR LICENSES are comprised of a combination of letters and numbers. (examples are AAA, CGC, CCC, CFC, CAC, RR, RA ER, E..).
- CONTRACTOR LICENSE numbers beginning with a “C” or “EC” are regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation.
- You can verify whether a Contractor is currently licensed by the STATE by accessing the state’s website at www.MyFloridaLicense.com or by calling 850-487-1395.
- CONTRACTOR LICENSE numbers beginning with an “R” or “S” are regulated by the county.
- You can verify whether any CONTRACTOR is licensed in SARASOTA COUNTY and whether there are any complaints filed against them by E-mailing Licenseing@scgov.net or calling 941-861-5214.

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- You can also access the COUNTY website to verify if the CONTRACTOR is licensed by checking the Sarasota County website at <https://www.scgov.net/government/planning-and-development-services/online-permitting> and then go to our Accela/Online Permitting to verify a license by clicking on General Information/Search for a License.
- Complaints against licensed Contractors should be filed with Contractor Licensing. By emailing Licensing@scgov.net or calling 941-861-5214.
- Individuals advertising in various newspapers and the phone books MUST have their CONTRACTOR LICENSE number in the advertisement.
- If a person who is advertising states LICENSED and INSURED in their advertisement but fails to put their CONTRACTOR LICENSE NUMBER in the advertisement, there is a good chance that they are not properly licensed.
- A CONTRACTOR must list their license numbers in all forms of advertisements and on their business cards, contracts, invoices, and proposals.
- If a CONTRACTOR has their business name on their vehicle they MUST list their CONTRACTOR LICENSE NUMBER on their vehicle.
- An UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR will usually ask you to obtain the permit or will advise you that a permit is not required.
- CONTRACTS written by UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS are unenforceable by law.
- An UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR cannot LEGALLY file a lien against your property.

BUILDING PERMITS

DID YOU KNOW?

- If you do obtain an OWNER/BUILDER permit, regardless of who actually performs the work, you as the OWNER/BUILDER are responsible for everything that occurs on the jobsite.
- If you have obtained a building permit as an OWNER/BUILDER to build or rebuild your home, you are required to provide direct on-site supervision of the construction yourself.
- If you obtain an OWNER/BUILDER permit, you cannot sell or lease (rent) the home for 1 year from the date the permit is Closed. If the home is sold or rented you can face the SAME PENALTIES as the UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR. Read the OWNER/BUILDER AFFIDAVIT before signing it.
- Sarasota County offers a guide titled **When a Building Permit is Required** that helps customer understand when a building permit is necessary.
- Before beginning construction, the required BUILDING PERMIT along with the required Plans must be posted in a conspicuous place on the jobsite.
- The BUILDING PERMIT protects you as the consumer and assures you that the work has been INSPECTED by a BUILDING INSPECTOR. Inspections are done to ensure that the work has been completed in accordance with the Florida Building Codes.

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MISCELLANEOUS

DID YOU KNOW?

- You should avoid paying CASH for any construction job because proof of payment is required to file a complaint. If you do pay cash, obtain a signed receipt.
- If you pay your contractor in full but he fails to pay the supplier, subcontractor, or employees that worked on your jobsite, a lien can be filed against your property which could result in you paying twice. You must become familiar with the FLORIDA CONSTRUCTION LIEN LAW. You can access an online brochure through the Department of Business and Professional Regulation through the state website:
https://main.putnam-fl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/florida_lien_law.pdf.
- That a CONTRACT should include the contractor's name, address, phone numbers and license number.
- That the CONTRACT should also include a PRECISE description of the work to be performed, including a draw schedule and anticipated completion dates.
- That any contractual disputes are CIVIL and must be dealt with through the Civil Court system or mediation.
- Unlicensed Activity anywhere in the state can be reported to the State of Florida by calling 866-532-1440 or by emailing: ULA@MyFloridaLicense.com.
- Unlicensed Activity in unincorporated Sarasota County can be reported by emailing: ULA@scgov.net.