

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Contractor Licensing and Building Permits

#### CONTRACTOR LICENSING

- CONTRACTOR LICENSES are a combination of letters and numbers. (examples are CGC, CCC, CFC, CAC, RR, RA, ER).
- CONTRACTOR LICENSE numbers beginning with a “C” or “EC” are regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation.
- CONTRACTOR LICENSE numbers beginning with an “R” or “S” are regulated by the county.
- Sarasota County requires all applicants applying for CONTRACTOR LICENSES to take a trade exam and a business and law exam, except journeyman who only requires the trade exam. Financial responsibility is also assessed.
- A CONTRACTOR LICENSE can be verified by accessing the state’s website at [www.MyFloridaLicense.com](http://www.MyFloridaLicense.com) or by calling 850-487-1395.
- To verify whether a person is LICENSED and REGISTERED in Sarasota County, visit the Accela Portal (<https://aca-prod.accela.com/SARASOTACO/Default.aspx> ) and scroll to General Information / Search for a license, email [licensing@scgov.net](mailto:licensing@scgov.net) or call 941-861-5214 / 941-861-3532.
- To verify whether a LICENSED CONTRACTOR has any complaints filed against them email [licensing@scgov.net](mailto:licensing@scgov.net) or call 941-861-5214.
- Complaints against LICENSED CONTRACTORS should be filed with Contractor Licensing by emailing [licensing@scgov.net](mailto:licensing@scgov.net) or drop off in either of our offices located at:
  - 4000 S Tamiami Trail, Room 2090, Venice 34293 or
  - 870 Apex Rd., Sarasota 34240.

## UNLICENSED CONTRACTING

- UNLICENSED ACTIVITY in unincorporated Sarasota County can be reported by emailing: [ULA@scgov.net](mailto:ULA@scgov.net).
- UNLICENSED ACTIVITY anywhere in the state can be reported to the State of Florida by calling 866-532-1440 or by accessing the state's website at [www.myfloridalicense.com](http://www.myfloridalicense.com).
- Complaints against an UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR should be reported to [ULA@scgov.net](mailto:ULA@scgov.net), the Department of Business Professional Regulation ([www.myfloridalicense.com](http://www.myfloridalicense.com)) AND the Sheriff's Office. This is not a civil matter.
- CONTRACTS written by UNLICENSED CONTRACTORS are unenforceable by law.
- An UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR cannot LEGALLY file a lien against your property.
- An UNLICENSED CONTRACTOR will usually ask you to obtain the permit or will advise you that a permit is not required.
- 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.
- 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.

## ADVERTISING

- Individuals advertising 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.
- Advertising complaints shall be filed with the Department of Business and Professional Regulation by accessing the State's website at [www.MyFloridaLicense.com](http://www.MyFloridaLicense.com) or by calling 850-487-1395.

## **BUILDING PERMITS**

- If you do obtain an OWNER/BUILDER permit, regardless of who performs the work, you as the OWNER/BUILDER are responsible for everything that occurs on the job site.
- 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 must be issued with approved plans which 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 LICENSED BUILDING INSPECTOR. Inspections are carried out to ensure that the work has been completed in accordance with the Florida Building Codes.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- 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 the contractor 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 which can be found under in Chapter 713 of Florida Statutes.
- CONTRACTS should include the contractor’s name, address, phone numbers and license number.
- CONTRACTS should include a PRECISE description of the work to be performed, including a draw schedule and anticipated completion dates.
- ANY contractual disputes are CIVIL and must be dealt with through the Civil Court system or mediation.