

Our Guide To Selecting A Qualified Roofing Contractor

Selecting a qualified contractor for a new roof on your home or commercial building is no simple matter. There is no absolute method to be sure you hire the contractor with whom you will be satisfied. But there are some ways to help evaluate the contractors who give you proposals, and Western States Roofing Contractors Association offers the following information about the traits of a qualified roofing contractor.

Your roofing contractor should have a *history*, which makes you comfortable and a *plan for your job*, which assures that you and the contractor have the same goals in mind. [Find A Roofing Contractor](#) who is a member of WSRCA.

History of Your Contractor:

1. Your roofing contractor should have a permanent and identifiable *place of business* complete with phone number, physical address, and the appropriate business licenses. Ask for this information if it is not provided with your written proposal.
2. Your roofing contractor should keep abreast of the latest developments in the industry. A professional contractor *belongs to local, regional, or national associations and attends seminars* on the problems and developments of the industry. Ask about this if the information is not provided in your written proposal. Ask if the contractor belongs to the WSRCA.
3. A qualified contractor should have insurance. Ask for *insurance certificates* showing both workers compensation and general liability insurance. Many homes and building owners have suffered needless expense because contractors working on their homes did not have these coverages.
4. A capable roofing contractor should be licensed. Every state, municipality, and county have varying requirements. Be sure your roofing contractor has the *appropriate licenses* for your area. Don't be afraid to call your local building department to check on the requirements.
5. Qualified roofing contractors should have *references* of past customers of the same type of system being installed for you. Contact the past customer to see if the contractor completed the job satisfactorily. Then look at a few jobs. Looking at some installed roofs is also a good way to be sure you have selected the roof system you want.
6. The roofing contractor may be an approved applicator for one or more roofing material manufacturers. Be sure to ask if the product you choose has an *approved applicator* program, and if your roofing contractor is certified. Keep in mind that most manufacturers of products for low sloped (flat) roofs have approved applicator programs, and most manufacturers of shingles and tile do not have these programs.
7. All roofing contractors should have a *written safety program*. An emphasis of safety lowers the cost of doing business, and further assures that your job will go smoothly. Ask your contractor about his safety program.
8. A good roofing contractor should have a *quality assurance program*. Ask who will inspect the work of the crew installing your new roof.
9. The roofing contractor should be *financially stable*. Ask for names of a few of the contractor's material suppliers - and call them for assurance.
10. Most of all, your roofing contractor should make you *feel comfortable* that the company has the experience and expertise to handle your roof installation.

The Plan For Your Job:

1. Your roofing contractor should provide you with a complete and **detailed written proposal** describing (a.) the work to be done, (b.) the cost of the work, (c.) the warranty included, (d.) the time frame for completion of the work, and (e.) the terms of payment.
2. If you are re-roofing or recovering an existing roof, any contractor should be able to tell you the **number of existing roof systems** in place and whether or not any of them need to be removed.
3. A qualified roofing contractor should tell you how any **changes in the contract** scope of work would be priced. Changes can occur if you add or subtract work from the contractor or if the contractor encounters unforeseen conditions which could not within reason been known at the start of the job.
4. The roofing contractor should be able to tell you about **the crew** who will install the job. Are they subcontractors? How much experience do they have?
5. A good roofing contractor should be able to tell you about **the details**. Who provides electricity? Who provides a toilet? How often will clean up be done? Do you have any obligations?
6. Your roofing contractor should obtain a **building permit** from the local governing agency. Be sure your contractor obtains a permit and call for final inspection. Be sure the roof has been inspected prior to final payment.
7. Your roofing contractor should not expect **payment in advance** for work that has not been started. Some contractors request payment for materials after they have been delivered. Insist on seeing a copy of the invoice and have the contractor provide you with a lien release from the supplier for the amount of the payment.
8. Your roofing contractor should have a supervisor **inspect the work** upon completion to be sure any deficiencies are corrected.
9. Your roofing contractor should provide you with a **written warranty** covering deficiencies in both materials and workmanship. A sample copy of the warranty should be provided with the proposal. Be sure you read it and question any part of it you don't understand.
10. Most of all, your roofing contractor **should make you feel comfortable** that your job has been thoroughly planned so that it will run as smoothly as possible.