



# Tips on Selecting a Contractor That's Right for You

## IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:

National Lumber Company assumes no responsibility and makes no representation as to the quality or performance of labor provided by any businesses listed in the Resource Book. The companies providing their business cards are members of the REMODELERS PRO FORCE, and therefore are customers of National Lumber. In using any and all services provided by contractors included in the National Lumber Company Contractor Resource Book, you acknowledge that National Lumber is not acting as your general contractor, lawyer, or agent and it is understood that National Lumber Company is not acting as an agent to any customer. **It is your responsibility to select a contractor, to check all references and to negotiate terms for any work performed.** You should consult with appropriate expert advisors to assist you in your home improvement plans.

*The information provided in this book is available as a courtesy to give you general guidelines for making informed decisions.*

## Search for a Remodeling Professional:

Finding a professional remodeler for your home improvement project can be a daunting task. Where do you begin your search? What questions do you ask? How do you know that the remodeler you are speaking to is reputable? National Lumber can help you learn to be in control of the remodeler contractor search.

National Lumber has provided our customers the "Home Improvement Professional Referral Book" as a tool to assist you in locating a remodeling professional.

Members of the "PRO Force" (Professional Remodeling Organization) of National Lumber are included in the Resource Book by project type. Remodelers do not pay for inclusion in the Resource Book.

*The PRO Force suggests that you pick at least 3 contractors, review the MA Dept. of Public Safety website information and take the following steps:*

**Ensure that the Contractor is appropriately licensed** and is a Licensed Construction Supervisor and/or a Registered Home Improvement Contractor with the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Safety's Board of Building Regulations and Standards ("BBRS"). For a direct link to the BBRS website, visit National Lumber Company's website, [www.national-lumber.com](http://www.national-lumber.com).

The Home Improvement Contractor Law, chapter 142A of the Massachusetts General Laws, *requires* any contractor performing work on an owner-occupied, single-family or owner-occupied, multi-family home (with a maximum of four units) to be registered with the Department. Check the website as some specific types of work are exempt.

*Since July 2008, all individuals who perform roof replacement, siding, and window replacement are required to hold both a Home Improvement Registration and a Construction Supervisor's License.*

**Ensure that the Contractor has adequate liability and workers compensation insurance.**

Be aware that if the Contractor does not have workman's compensation insurance and a worker gets hurt on your job, *you could be held responsible!* The same liability applies to you if he/she damages your neighbor's property and doesn't have liability insurance. For extra peace of mind, ask the Contractor the name of his insurance company *and call that insurance company to verify that he does have liability and workman's compensation coverage currently in force.* The MA registration or license process does not require proof of insurance.

## NATIONAL LUMBER Home Centers and Lumberyards

245 Oakland St  
Mansfield, MA 02048  
P: 508-337-8020  
F: 508-261-6449

15 Needham St  
Newton, MA 02461  
P: 617-244-8020  
F: 617-964-4774

120 Welby Rd  
New Bedford, MA 02745  
P: 508-990-8020  
F: 508-998-7058

25 Central St  
Berlin, MA 01503  
P: 978-838-2491  
F: 978-838-2692

33 Mason St  
Salem, MA 01970  
P: 978-744-8800  
F: 978-744-7076

95 Pearson Blvd  
Gardner, MA 01440  
P: 978-630-5200  
F: 978-630-5111

112 High St  
Boscawen, NH 03303  
P: 603-796-2131  
F: 603-796-6062

**Ask each Contractor for referrals** — a written list of his/her **three most recent projects** (preferably projects similar to your planned project) with names, telephone numbers and addresses of the owners. Call the project owners and ask how satisfied they were with the job and the performance of the Contractor. Check the Contractor's website, if available.

**Check with your local Better Business Bureau, the Board of Building Regulations and Standards and the Office of the Attorney General** to find out whether the Contractor has any complaints filed against the Contractor, or whether or not any disciplinary action has been taken against the Contractor.

**Select a Contractor vs. choosing from multiple bids.** If you've done your research and are comfortable that a Contractor is right for your job and will be respectful of your budget, it is fine to select a Contractor without taking bids. You may also request bids but **note that the best bid is not always the lowest.** The quality of materials, experience, quality and capability of the companies may differ. Examine the scope of the proposals carefully checking for similar inclusions such as waste removal and guarantees.

*Once you've selected a Contractor & before you sign any agreement or contract:*

**Written Contract:** Do not enter into any construction agreements without a written contract. Before signing a contract make sure that your attorney reviews the contract. All work exceeding \$1000 requires a written contract and the conditions which are required to be included are defined by the MA State Building Code.

**Building Permit:** Ensure that you authorize the Contractor to apply for the building permit as your agent. Registered Home Improvement Contractors are required by law to apply for all building permits which are subject to the Home Improvement Registration Law.

The BBRS strongly cautions building owners against applying for their own building permit. Reputable Contractors will apply for the permit, acting as the owner's agent and with the owner's written authority. If a Contractor is reluctant to apply for the building permit on your behalf it may be an indication that the Contractor does not possess a license or a registration.

**Other Resources:** There are many resources on the Internet. The information on this Tip Sheet is only a starting point. For more in-depth information on Remodelers in your area, research professional organizations such as the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI).

Information for this Tip Sheet was compiled from the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Safety Board of Building Regulations and Standards website and remodelsquad.com.