**The Final Pick:** After all your hard work, you have finally found your contractor! The contractor may use their written estimate as a final contract or may present the same information in a different document. As your project gets underway, here are a few things to consider:

- **Look carefully before you sign.**
  A complete contract should state clearly all tasks to be performed, all associated costs and the payment schedule. Never sign a blank contract or one with blank spaces. Guarantees made verbally by the contractor should be written into the contract. It should state how long the guarantee is valid, what it covers, and who is responsible. Make sure to keep a copy of the contract and any receipts in a safe place with your home owner’s manual.

- **Make final payments only when all work is completed to your satisfaction.**
  A reputable contractor will not threaten or pressure you to sign if the job is not finished properly.

- **Pay by check, not cash.**
  Any legitimate contractor will work with you and accept a check or a cashier’s check. Don’t get pushed into anything else.

---

**World Watch Out!**
**For contractor scams...**

- **Avoid anybody who says they can speed up insurance payments or building permits.**
  They can’t; or if they do, they are doing so illegally.

- **Avoid anybody who wants a cash deposit or cash advance for payments in full.**

- **Don’t get rushed into a decision because you are responding to a disaster.**
  Scam artists love to prey on natural disaster victims or other high stress situations. Even though you may just want things fixed and back to normal NOW, do not rush into making a decision. Ask the same questions and go through the same process that you would at any other time. You do not want to make a bad situation worse.

- **If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.**
  Be skeptical of low bids and great deals. Although price is important, professionalism and quality of workmanship should also be considered.

---

**Better Business Bureau**

P.O. Box 9817  
Boise, ID 83707  
Phone: 1-800-218-1001  
Fax: 208-342-5116  
Email: Info@boise.bbb.org  
Website: www.bbb.org

**Idaho Division of Building Safety**

1090 E. Watertower St.  
Meridian, ID 83642  
Phone: 208-334-3950  
Toll Free: 1-800-955-3044  
Website: dbs.idaho.gov

Costs associated with this publication are available from the Division of Building Safety in accordance with section 60-202, Idaho Code, DBS-E-09-10-2,500
When you have work done in your home, you literally have to live with the results! When the work involves your home’s electrical systems you can never be too careful. Electricity is not only dangerous to work with, it can pose serious safety hazards if a job isn’t performed correctly.

How do you know an electrician will treat you and your home right and give you a fair price and a job well done? Your Better Business Bureau has teamed up with the Idaho Division of Building Safety to bring you these tips:

**Make a List:** First, get a list of contractor names to call and research.

- **Ask around.** Friends and family may have some first-hand recommendations. You can also ask your local electrical supply store for reputable contractors.

- **Check with the BBB.** The BBB has great information on contractors in your area. Check bbb.org to get a list of electrical contractors accredited by the BBB.

- **Look at their services.** If you’re hiring a contractor for a specific project make sure that the electrician offers the services you need. If he/she needs to hire a subcontractor, it could cost you more.

**Make Some Calls:** Your next job is to narrow your list of contractors to 3-5. Start by calling each and getting the following information:

- **Verification of licenses.** Idaho requires all electrical contractors to be tested and to keep their licenses up to date. Get the contractor’s license number and check with the state to verify the license. Go to dbs.idaho.gov.

- **Verification of insurance.** The contractor should carry general liability insurance and workers’ compensation. If not, you may be liable for accidents that occur on your property.

- **References of former customers.** Call some of the electrician’s references. Ask them if they were happy with the work done, if the contractor finished as planned, if the contractor left everything clean and if they would use the contractor again. If you got the name of the contractor from a friend or family member, ask the same questions.

**Get An Estimate:** Once you have the list narrowed down, set up times for in-home estimates. A good electrician will never diagnose the problem over the phone. Estimates should always be in writing and should always include a full description of the services to be provided.

- **Understand the problem** A good electrician should be able to diagnose the problem and explain what needs to be done in terms you understand. Don’t be afraid to ask questions.

- **While they are at your house, get a “read” on the person.** Ask yourself, “Is this somebody I trust?” “Can I work with them for an extended period of time?” and “Am I willing to let them into my home?”

- **Once you get the bid, ask questions.** If one contractor’s bid is substantially higher or lower than the others, ask why. They may have noticed something the others did not. If there is anything you don’t understand, ask the contractor about it or ask a knowledgeable friend.

For more tips and information as well as help finding trusted businesses go to www.BBB.org.