

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Choosing A Reputable Fence Contractor

(NAPSA)—Adding a fence to a property can increase the beauty and value of a home. With the right fence contractor, homeowners can be assured of a long-lasting fence that secures or adds architectural interest to their property.

Following a few simple guidelines can really make a difference when selecting a fence contractor. The American Fence Association (AFA) recommends homeowners insist on the following to ensure their contractor is reputable:

Product Samples—The contractor should have product samples for homeowners to see and touch to ensure they are getting the material they want. While less expensive materials are available, choosing materials that conform to American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) minimum standards help assure longevity and durability.

Written Contracts—Homeowners should insist upon a written contract to protect them if the contractor fails to fulfill part of the agreed upon work.

Certificates of Insurance—Reputable contractors fully insure their work and products to protect homeowners from liability.

References—Homeowners should request references. Once they have received references, they should call and ask:

Were they satisfied with their fence?

Was the job completed on time?

Was the contractor responsive to questions and concerns?

Would they use the contractor again?

Some homeowners may also



choose to view the contractor's finished work.

Homeowners who choose to use an AFA Contractor can be assured that he or she will provide all of the above and more. AFA Contractors abide by a strict code of ethics to demonstrate their dedication to quality, professionalism and integrity, and have access to a wide variety of educational opportunities that keep them up-to-date on the latest products and installation techniques.

In addition, some AFA Contractors take their commitment to customer satisfaction a step further by becoming Certified Fence Professionals (CFP). These members go through a rigorous process that includes earning continuing education credits and passing a thorough written exam. Those who successfully complete the process may use the CFP designation for three years, then they must recertify to retain CFP status.

To search for a reputable fence contractor visit the American Fence Association web site at www.americanfenceassociation.com or call (800) 822-4342.