



INTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Choosing A Safe Contractor

(NAPSA)—Working with the right handyman may not only help you get your home improvement job done faster, it could help keep your family safe as well.

“Aside from family and friends, the people invited into our homes most often are the people we hire to work around the house. So it is imperative that homeowners take measures to ensure they only invite reputable, respected contractors into their homes,” says Keith Hahn, chief operating officer of Handyman Connection, a national network of home improvement and repair contractors.

Hahn offers these simple guidelines to help homeowners protect themselves when hiring outside vendors to perform work within the home:

1. Insist that contractors provide written estimates on company letterhead.
2. Ask contractors to provide written guarantees.
3. Find someone else if a contractor insists on cash payment.
4. Ask yourself: Are the contractor's licenses and registrations valid?
5. Ask yourself: Did the contractor offer you a legitimate business card?
6. Ask for proof of third-party property and injury insurance.
7. Are the contractor and any related trades persons bonded?
8. Check to see if the contractor is registered with the Better Business Bureau.
9. Ask for proof of membership in local Home Builders Associations or Chambers of Commerce.
10. How long has the contrac-



Working with a reputable contractor may help keep your family safe.

tor been in business and can he/she provide references from previous customers?

While taking these steps still might not completely protect your family, Hahn stresses that prevention is the best policy and encourages homeowners to heed his advice any time an outside contractor is hired for work on or around the home.

“Asking a contractor the right types of questions will let you know if that contractor is on the level,” says Hahn. “It may end up costing you more than hiring someone off the street for a few simple repairs, but in the long run, homeowners will more than make up for the minimal cost in terms of safety and peace-of-mind, not to mention the quality of the work performed.”

For more information, call 1-800-466-5530 or visit www.handymanconnection.com.