

Home Improvement: When to Call a Pro In Over Your Head? Know When To Say When

(NAPSA)—The day started out innocently enough. You just wanted to replace those ugly faucet handles in the upstairs bathtub. But when you tried to install the new handles, you realized they didn't fit. Rather than lose momentum, you attempted to improvise a solution. After two hours of drilling, hammering and frustration, you're now stuck with a tub with no faucet handles and the expensive prospect of replacing all of your faucet hardware. Maybe it would've been wise to call for professional help at the first sign of trouble.

"Homeowners can save themselves a lot of money and aggravation just by knowing when to call a pro," says Keith Hahn of Handyman Connection, one of the nation's leading home repair and maintenance companies.

According to Hahn, there are three common traps that homeowners should watch out for. "The first trap is what we'll call 'uncharted waters,' and the tub faucet story is a perfect example," says Hahn. "If a job takes you into unfamiliar territory, the odds of making an expensive mistake increase greatly."

The second trap, says Hahn, is when you find "more than you bargained for." Hahn shares the story of a homeowner stripping wallpaper from his kitchen walls. Near one corner, the homeowner's stripping knife plunges completely through the wall, revealing months of water damage. "The smart homeowner stops right there and calls a pro, because water damage can create a multitude of problems in addition to the obvious need for drywall repair—



rotten wood, plumbing problems and much more."

Finally, there's the "pride" trap. Sometimes a small project simply spins out of control. Have you ever hammered a nail into a wall only to see large chunks of plaster fall to the floor? Or have you ever tried to unscrew a stubborn plumbing fixture and watched helplessly as water sprayed from the pipe you dislodged from the wall?

According to Hahn, most home repair blunders fall into the third category. "Call a pro instead of letting pride trick you into chasing problems," says Hahn. "Some jobs attempted by homeowners are just doomed from the start, and your frustration may only compound the problem and cost you more money.

"When in doubt," Hahn adds, "it's almost always cheaper to hire a professional handyman rather than learning by trial and error."

Keith Hahn is the chief operating officer of Handyman Connection, a nationwide network of home improvement and repair contractors. For more information, call 1-800-466-5530 or visit www.handymanconnection.com.