

Tips for Hiring a Contractor



Hiring a contractor to install a PV system on your home or business is a major financial commitment. The following tips will help you find the best contractor for the job.



1. Hire only licensed contractors - Verify the contractor's license number by calling the Contractors State License Board at 1-800-321-2752 or visiting www.cslb.ca.gov for California residents. Nevada residents may call (775) 688-1141 or check online at www.nvcontractorsboard.com.

2. Hire insured contractors - Always insist upon a certificate of insurance for general liability insurance. Uninsured workers who are injured on the job can file damage claims against the homeowner.

3. Verify Workers' Compensation Insurance - California requires this form of insurance for any employer with one or more employees. If your contractor is exempt from the workers' compensation requirement, it means any workers on the job must belong to another subcontractor who is insured.

4. Get references - Always get at least three references from previous customers of the contractor, and review past work.

5. GET MULTIPLE BIDS - Get three (3) bids and use a written plan, so you can compare apples to apples.

6. Get a thorough written contract before any work begins - Any work valued at over \$500 requires a contract. In the contract, be sure to specify the start and completion dates of the job, and insist on a progressive payment schedule that is spelled out in dollars and cents. If you're going to spend thousands of dollars, consider investing another \$200 to have an attorney review your contract for your protection.

7. Never sign a contract under pressure - Insist on at least 48 hours to study any contract.

8. Pay as you go - To start a job, never pay more than 10% down or \$1,000--whichever is less. Hold back 10% for the final payment after the entire job is complete. Never pay for work before it is done.

9. Never pay cash - Pay by check or credit card.

10. Keep a job file - Put receipts, permits, plans and anything else pertaining to your job in the file.

Source: [California Contractors State Licensing Board](http://CaliforniaContractorsStateLicensingBoard.com)

You can search for solar contractors at:

www.gosolarcalifornia.ca.gov/retailers/index.html or at

www.findsolar.com

