

## “WHY SHOULD I HIRE A LICENSED PLUMBER?”

As a homeowner you don't want to spend more than you have to for home repairs or renovations. Unfortunately more and more handyman type enterprises are sprouting up across the country, this means that homeowners need to be vigilant when hiring people to do work in their home.

You think you do your homework. You ask around and get different estimates. That *cheap* price is really looking good. You have to stop and ask yourself though if the *cheaper* price is the *better* one. There *is* a difference.

Is the guy with the cheaper price *fully licensed as a plumber*?

Does he have adequate *liability insurance*?

Will he pull a *plumbing permit*?

Are you sure he'll do the job *right*?

Does he offer *references*?

Does he offer a *guarantee*?

These are all questions you should be asking and here's why...

Scenario 1: You see a flyer at the grocery store advertising “Handyman services” They do plumbing, carpentry, painting, electrical, etc. You have a few projects around the house that you've been putting off so you give the guy a call. He says he's got a lot of experience in construction trades, been doing it for 25 years! Sounds great right? Wrong...

You hire him to replace the shower valve in your master bathroom. It looks like he did a nice job. Unbeknown to you...there is a pipe leaking inside the wall. Time passes. Your water bill has gone up and you can't figure out why. The drywall around your tub is starting to discolor, and then you notice a musty odor. You call the guy to have him take a look but he doesn't return your calls. So you start to investigate on your own, tear the drywall off, find the leak...and MOLD. Now what? The guy won't return your calls and he probably doesn't have liability insurance. .. So you and your insurance company are left holding the bag. But wait! He wasn't a licensed plumber, which means your insurance company can refuse to pay the claim. This could leave you to pay thousands of dollars out of pocket to fix this mess.

Scenario 2: Accidents happen... What if the guy you hire falls off a ladder and breaks his arm. He has no liability insurance. This means that you (and your insurance company) can be 100% liable for his injury and you'll still have to pay someone to finish those projects.

Scenario 3: You hire a local licensed plumber. Does he cost more? Sure, but you are paying for expertise and peace of mind. By hiring a licensed plumber, you're hiring years of knowledge and experience that stand behind that license. In the event that something does go wrong (and things can go wrong!) his liability insurance is there to cover it with no out of pocket expense to you.

Which scenario sounds better to you?

Don't get me wrong. Not all licensed plumbers are created equal. Do your homework, ask around. Word of mouth is a powerful tool. If you don't have friends or family that have used a plumber recently, call the local plumbing inspector or call your local city or township offices; who does their work?

When you contact plumbers, don't be afraid to ask the questions outlined above. If you are not comfortable with the answers; listen to your gut and keep looking. Do not hesitate to ask to see a plumber's license. Most states require them to carry a wallet size copy for this reason. You can also contact the Department of Construction for your particular county for more information on licensing requirements or to verify a license.

For any home project; your goal should be to hire a contractor who will give you *quality, knowledgeable* service with *the safety and comfort* of your family in mind...for the *best* price.