



ABOUT THE BCB - FLORIDA

The Better Contractors Bureau is a non-profit consumer protection agency established in 1974 to be of assistance to the homeowner when dealing with contractors. Its mission is to "PROTECT & INFORM" the consumer and its goals are to Eliminate the unscrupulous contractors in the area and Upgrade the image of the remodeling and home building industry.

The BCB, (as it is more commonly known as) has approximately 400 members who must meet rigid requirements to become a member! They must be licensed, meet the BCB Standards, swear to abide by a strict Code of Ethics, provide proof of their liability and workmen's comp insurance, a legal contract, and be in business for at least a minimum of one year or have five years' experience in the trades. In addition, they must provide two supplier and one past customer reference. They cannot have any outstanding unrectified complaints. After a one-year trial membership contractor members are given the prestigious designation as "Registered Professionals"!

The BCB is funded partially by membership dues, grants and its annual Remodelrama home show now going into its 35th year in Rochester, New York. It works closely with senior organizations, Attorney General and many trade organizations.

BCB SERVICES OFFERED

The BCB has close to 10,000 contractors on its data base and offers many services to the public. Listed below are four of the major ones.

1. Complaint Filing:

Complaints are accepted from consumers on workmanship issues ONLY on Home Improvements and Home Building construction within a three (3) year period unless a contract indicates a warranty or guarantee is for a longer time period! Upon receiving a complaint along with a copy of a contract and the \$15 processing fee the complaint will be reviewed by the BCB staff then sent to the company involved asking that they respond within 30 days with their version of their customer's claims. When the contractor response is returned a copy is sent to the customer asking that they respond to it within 10 days. If a contractor doesn't respond to the complaint within the allotted time period the complaint is forwarded to the Attorney General, any organizations the contractor may belong to, senior groups, along with TV and newspaper investigative reporters informing them of the contractor's refusal to respond to consumer complaints.

2.Mediation:

In cases where a complaint cannot be settled through the BCB's regular complaint process it offers a formal in-house Mediation Program!

3.Expert Opinion:

Where a difference of opinion occurs between the customer and contractor as to the complaint filed we offer a service where an expert in the trades will go to the site and give a full written report with his analysis and opinion as to the workmanship and a recommendation as a way to settle the matter amicably to try to avoid costly legal and time consuming court cases. The fee for the Expert's opinion is \$200 in Cape Coral, Fla. and \$250 in Ft. Myers, Fla. The Expert will also be available to represent either party in court to give testimony to verify his report for \$200 per day.

4.Inquiries:

Consumers can call to check on a contractor's reputation that they are considering for their home improvement project or new home! But no guarantees are given but it is advisable to use a BCB members as at the least should a member not respond to a complaint they would be expelled as a member and all efforts would be made to seek justice for the consumer!

5.Information:

The BCB will try to answer technical trade questions regarding workmanship or materials to give the consumer a better understanding of how trades people perform or products used. And if not immediately able to answer a question they will find out the information and respond back to the consumer!