

## City of Sandwich

### Selecting a Contractor

Additions or alterations to a home that do not abide by city ordinances can affect title transfers should a property owner decide to sell their house. Therefore, selecting a contractor is an important task.

It is the homeowner's responsibility to see the compliance of all requested inspections.

**Following are suggestions\* when choosing a contractor.**

1. Obtain at least three bids on any project. The only exception should be for minor, low-cost projects or emergency repairs made by trusted contractors.
2. Never pay for a project in advance. If a contractor asks for total payment up front, you should consider looking for another contractor. Small retainer fees or payments for materials already on the job site may be appropriate.
3. In writing, set up a schedule for progress payments with amounts and when they are to be paid.
4. Get all change work orders and costs (additional or reimbursement) in writing and have signatures attached.
5. Beware the contractor who suggests that you do not obtain required permits or inspections. This contractor may intend to do the work contrary to established safety or structural standards.
6. Ask for a list of previous jobs similar to your proposed project.
7. Ask for references **AND** check them.
8. Check with the Illinois Attorney General's Office (1-800-386-5438) or the Better Business Bureau (1-312-832-0500) or any business organizations that relate to the contractor's trade to verify the contractor's performance record.
9. Before works begins, obtain evidence that the contractor has obtained a permit. Permit should be on site and available at all times during the building process and until all final inspections have been approved. As the project progresses, monitor the inspection records. This will protect you from being responsible for code violations that the contractor might commit on your property. **Remember, it is the responsibility of the homeowner to see the compliance of required inspections.**
10. When the project is complete, be sure that the project has passed all city inspections and a final occupancy permit has been issued.

\*This list is merely suggestive and not legally binding on either party.

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