



# Home Improvement Contractors

Categories : [Consumer Services](#)

The following is summarized from the State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection's web page on Home Improvement: <https://portal.ct.gov/dcp/Trade-Practices-Division/Home-Improvement-for-Consumers>

## HIRING A HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTOR

The Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) recommends the following steps when hiring a home improvement contractor:

- All home improvement contractors must be registered with DCP and display their registration number with all advertising. Contact DCP to see if prospective contractors are registered.
- Ask for references from former customers to contact.
- Get more than one estimate, especially on large construction projects.
- Take time to learn what the project involves, including the kinds of materials to be used.

## HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTS

Home improvement contracts must be in writing, along with all contract modifications. The contract must be signed by both the contractor and the homeowner and include start and completion dates for the project. It should also include notice of the homeowner's right to cancel within three business days (which includes Saturdays). The homeowner should plan a payment schedule to the contractor in accordance to the progress of the work and include it in the contract. Homeowners should not pay the entire amount, or a large advance payment, of the project costs before work is started. Otherwise, the homeowner will have more to lose if the contractor fails to complete the job.

## HOW TO REGISTER A COMPLAINT

To file a complaint, write to:  
Department of Consumer Protection, Complaint Center  
450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06106.

Complaints will be reviewed to determine if DCP can help. Connecticut homeowners can also contact the Remodeling Contractors Association: ([www.narict.org/](http://www.narict.org/)) which processes complaints against member firms and tries to mediate disputes. Homeowners may also wish to consult their attorneys. Small Claims Court can be used for claims up to \$5,000.

## HOME IMPROVEMENT GUARANTY FUND

Homeowners who are unable to get money returned from contractors may be eligible to receive money from the Home Improvement Guaranty Fund: <https://portal.ct.gov/DCP/Common-Elements/Consumer-Facts-and-Contacts/Home-Improvement-Guaranty-Fund>. The following criteria must be met:

- The contractor must be registered with DCP at the time of the contract signing or within two years before the date you signed the contract or at the time of your court judgment;
- The contract must be for work on residential property (single or multi-family dwellings of 6 units or less or



condos or cooperatives);

- The total cost of the work must be more than \$200
- The homeowner must apply within two years after receipt of a court judgment against the contractor;
- For Federal or Superior Court judgments the homeowner must have attempted to collect the money owed to them by means of a marshal's writ of execution and been unsuccessful;
- For judgments by Small Claims Courts, homeowners are not required to collect money owed them with a marshal's writ of execution.

Eligible homeowners can recover actual damages, court costs and attorneys' fees from the Guaranty Fund, as ordered in a court judgment, up to \$15,000. Attorney fees are payable only if your court judgment includes the attorney fees in the awarded amount.

**TO FIND PROVIDERS IN CONNECTICUT'S COMMUNITY RESOURCES DATABASE:** *Search by service name:*  
[Contractor Complaints](#)

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*SOURCES: State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection website; Remodeling Contractors Association website*

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