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*For information about fraud and scams or to schedule a presentation about fraud related issues and prevention contact:*

*Maro Casparian  
Dir. Consumer Fraud  
amc@denverda.org  
720.913.9036*



**DenverDA**

Mitchell R. Morrissey, District Attorney - Second Judicial District  
201 W. Colfax Avenue, Dept. 801, Denver, CO 80202

Bus. Phone: 720-913-9000  
Fax: 720-913-9035



**Mitch Morrissey**  
Denver District Attorney

## **Consumer Advisory**

# **Don't Get Nailed by Spring Scams**

Spring is here...I think! And as spring arrives in the Rocky Mountain region, we can count on a few things like snow, flowers blooming, and scammers posing as reliable contractors waiting to take advantage of home improvement plans.

If you're thinking about building a deck, a patio or cleaning out those gutters, it might make sense to hire a professional rather than take on the job yourself. Finding a good contractor is important since a home improvement project gone wrong can cost you big time. But, choosing the wrong contractor can cost you more than money; it can lead to delays, subpar work, and even legal problems.

Before you hire a contractor, get several estimates and ask plenty of questions, including:

- How many projects like mine have you completed in the last year?
- Will my project require a permit? (Don't fall for a contractor saying they can get the job done without a permit. Again, the cost on the back-end will be far greater than the cost of a permit.)
- What types of insurance do you carry?
- And be sure to get a written contract. It should be clear and concise and include who is going to do the work, the specifics of the project, projected timing and cost of your project.

How can you tell if a contractor might *not* be reputable? Red flags include someone who: knocks on your door for business, just "happens to have materials left over" from a previous job, pressures you for an immediate decision, only accepts cash, asks you to pay everything up-front, or asks *you* to get the required building permits. These are just some of the early warning signs that you may not be dealing with the right contractor.

**Denver DA's Fraud Line: 720-913-9179**