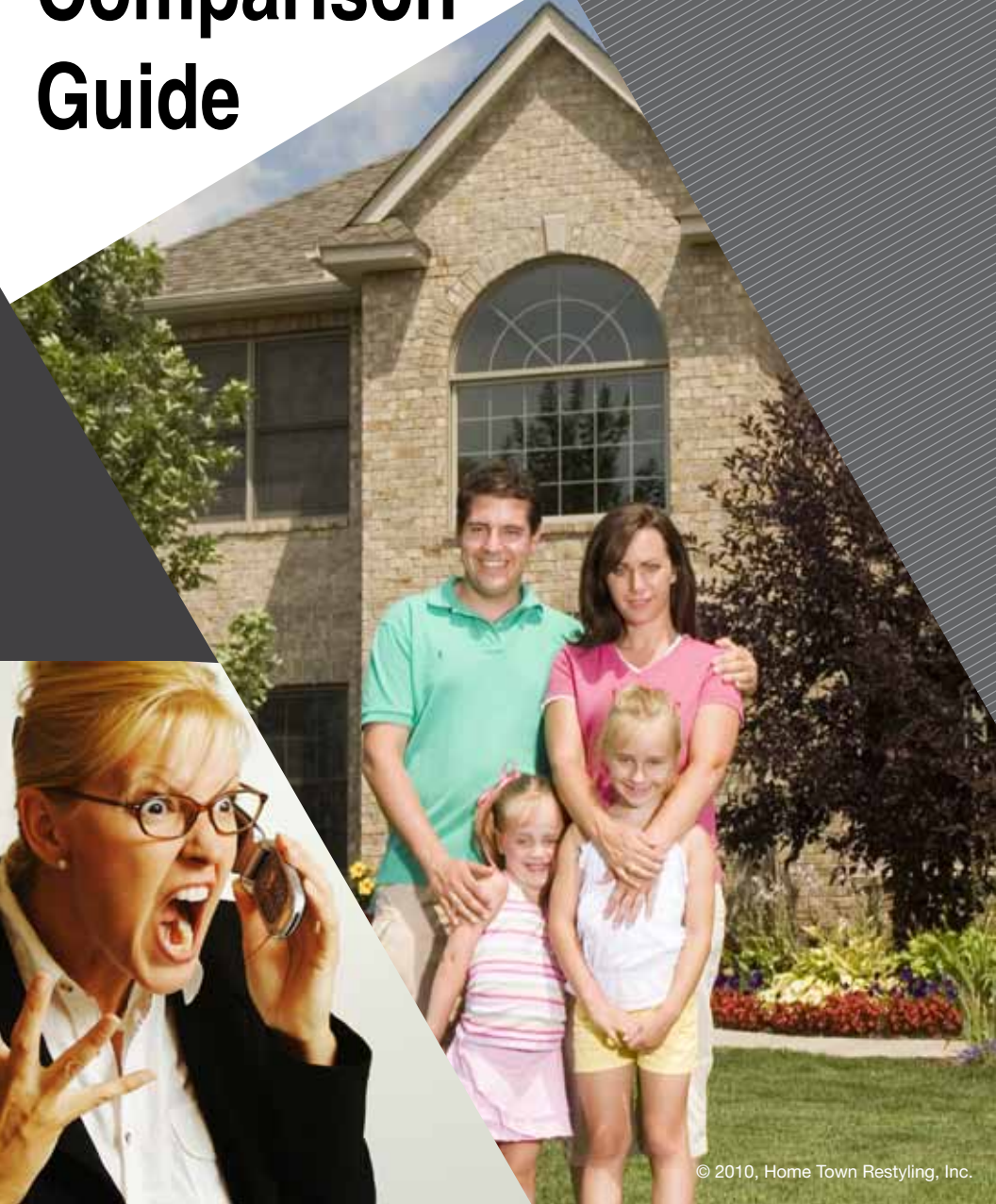


Iowa Contractor Comparison Guide



How to Make Your Remodeling Project a Success

SOURCES:

SOURCE – SIO (SURETY INFORMATION OFFICE) COPYRIGHT 2006

SOURCE – SMALL BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

SOURCE - HOME TECH

SOURCE – CONSUMER GUIDE TO HOME ENERGY SAVINGS

SOURCE – AMY JOHNSTON, MASTER CONSTRUCTION MANAGER

SOURCE - Better Business Bureaus. (2010). Home Renos-Tips on Hiring a Contractor. Retrieved January 16, 2010, from Better Business Bureaus Website: <http://vi.bbb.org/article/home-renos---tips-on-hiring-a-contractor-5560>

SOURCE – Better Business Bureaus. (2010). Our Accreditation Standards. Retrieved January 16, 2010, from Better Business Bureaus Website: <http://iowa.bbb.org/localstandards/>

SOURCE – Patel, N. (2009, December 15). Contractor Comparison. Retrieved January 16, 2010, from remodeling magazine 2010 website: <http://www.remodeling.hw.net/sales-leads/contractor-comparison.aspx>

SOURCE – JEFFREY GITOMER'S SALES CAFFEINE ISSUE 431



Iowa Contractor Comparison Guide

The Iowa Contractor Comparison Guide along with the compliance checklist will help you in making an educated decision on your next remodeling project. This will protect you from shoddy work practices, saving you potentially thousands of dollars. Anybody with any amount of previous work experience can label themselves as a 'Contractor'. It's difficult for even the most perceptive consumer to tell the difference between a good contractor and a bad one.

Every year, thousands of contractors face bankruptcy and business failure. These firms leave behind unfinished projects and Billions of dollars in losses to project owners. 96% of all contractors fail in 5 years and 50% of them fail in the first year leaving the homeowner without any recourse on warranty and installation issues.

Don't be a victim!

Homeowners will spend close to \$200 Billion in remodeling their homes this year and almost 40% of that money is being re-spent on last years project that failed. Overall, less than 30% of the people will be satisfied with their home improvement project.

It is senseless to invest thousands of dollars in home remodeling projects only to have them installed by amateurs or have the contractor go out of business. No contractor will tell you up front to expect a poor installation. The question is, how do you get the value you are looking for?

Take a few minutes and read over the Iowa Contractor Comparison Guide. These simple steps will save you headaches and money, now and years in the future.

Here is a quick breakdown and explanation of what you should be looking for:





Reputation

Better Business Bureau

Membership: Homeowners should

find out if a contractor is a member of

a professional association that

has standards or a code of

ethics. All BBB Accredited

Businesses have agreed to

uphold BBB standards for ethics in the

marketplace. When a contractor wants to

become a member of the BBB there are many

standards they must comply with in order to be an accredited

member. Some of those standards include, being free from an unsatisfactory

report at the BBB in the service area where the company is headquartered, they must promptly respond

to all complaints that a customer makes to the BBB, and they must also adhere to BBB standards of

advertising and selling. Homeowners can check with the BBB to learn how long a contractor has been

in business and whether the firm has been responsive to any complaints filed with the BBB. You can do

this by visiting the BBB website at www.bbb.org/us, click on "check out a business or charity", and then

enter the company name and information you are interested in. We advise you not to hire any contractor

who is not a member of the BBB.



Registration with local Home Builders Association:

All reputable contractors are members of the local Home Builders Association and adhere to their strict standards in the remodeling industry. If you would like to see the members of the local Home Builders

Association please visit their website at www.crhba.org, click on "customer", and then click on HBA

Remodelers.



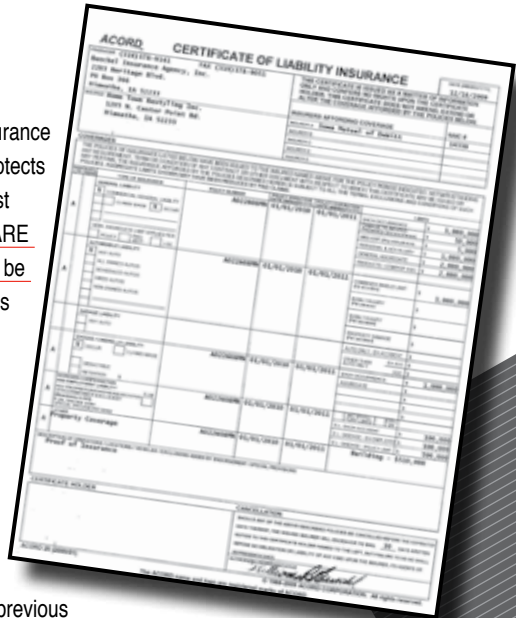
Documentation of paid Worker's Compensation:

All reputable contractors pay Worker's Compensation insurance. Workers Compensation and employers liability insurance insures against injuries to workers and protects you against workers making claims against your property insurance. Without it, you ARE deemed the statutory employer and could be liable if anyone working on your property is injured.

This insurance can make up to 15% of their payroll expenses, so smaller outfits go without.

Letters of Recommendation:

All reputable contractors will bring letters of recommendation, and will also be able to supply you with testimonials from previous customers regarding past work completed.



WIN \$50 CASH! Enter to win \$50 in our monthly drawing by only taking a few moments to fill out this card and mail or drop off at one of our offices.

Our Mission Statement: To understand our customers needs and budget, provide quality products and craftsmanship to their satisfaction.

Name: *Eric*
Phone: *502-233-1111*
Address: *1000 S. Main St. #100*
City: *Little Rock, AR*
E-Mail: *eric@eric.com*

Please rate us on the following:

	Poor	1	2	3	4	Excellent
1) Professionalism of Representative						5
2) Quality of installation						5
3) Did we clean up the jobsite?						5
4) Communication (responsive)						5
5) Value of overall service provided						5

Why did you choose us?
 Price Location Recommendation
 Installation & Service Other: *Service with previous job*

Did you get a quote from another company before choosing us? Yes No

Are you planning any other projects in the future? YES NO What: _____

Comments: *It was a pleasure working with Eric. Bill was very careful and did great job at making our home look great. Thanks*

Customer Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____
 Zip: _____

Our Mission Statement: To understand our customers needs and budget, provide quality products and craftsmanship to their satisfaction.

Name: *Eric*
Phone: *502-233-1111*
Address: *1000 S. Main St. #100*
City: *Little Rock, AR*
E-Mail: *eric@eric.com*

Please rate us on the following:

	Poor	1	2	3	4	Excellent
1) Professionalism of Representative						5
2) Quality of installation						5
3) Did we clean up the jobsite?						5
4) Communication (responsive)						5
5) Value of overall service provided						5

Why did you choose us?
 Price Location Recommendation
 Installation & Service Other: *we have used you for two jobs*

Did you get a quote from another company before choosing us? Yes No

Are you planning any other projects in the future? YES NO What: _____

Comments: *Steve & Derrick Bergman did a great job of installing our triple wide patio door + transition + other reasons in regards to having proper door weather, gelco + stayed on schedule. Thanks!! Steve & Derrick Bergman*

Customer Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____
 Zip: _____



Stability

Insurance Certificate – not 'self-insured':

Home Town Restyling provides an insurance certificate so that customers know they are protected while we are working on their projects. Be sure to check with all contractors to make sure they have an insurance certificate and the insurance is valid. Always verify the insurance by calling the agency. A copy of an insurance certificate does not let you know if the policy is still current even if the certificate has an expiration date. You cannot tell if either party has canceled the insurance. If for some reason you allow a contractor to work on your home without insurance and a disaster occurs, you are financially liable for anything that may happen on your property.



Lien Wavers:

When final payment is made, it's in your best interest to get a lien waiver from your contractor. If your contractor does not pay the bills, subcontractors and/or material suppliers have the legal right to put a lien on your home.



Lead Paint Certification:

The lead paint rules established by the EPA are changing which will have significant impacts on contractors. Beginning April 22nd 2010, any projects done on a home built before 1978 will have to be done by a contractor who has been certified in lead paint removal. Contractors must be EPA certified in lead paint removal whether they are a self-employed contractor or an employee of a large remodeling company.



Workmanship:

Detailed Written Proposal:

Most consumers are oblivious to the fact that there are many levels of job proposals which in most cases leads to cost over-runs. Your written proposal should include each of the following: Total number of units, model numbers of product, and will include color, size, location, unique options including grids, types of wood, who is staining, who is responsible for permit, unique installation instructions personalized for your project, bad wood, how unforeseen obstacles will be handled. Will include total cash price, payment terms, insurance coverage, and who files for any rebates or credits.

The top form is a 'WORKSMANSHIP WARRANTY' with a red decorative border. It includes the Home Town Restyling logo and address: 1205 N. Center Point Rd., Haverhill, IA. Below the logo is a table with columns for 'ITEM', 'QUANTITY', 'COLOR', and 'FINISH'. The bottom form is an 'AGREEMENT' with a grid for listing items and a section for 'AGREEMENT' terms.

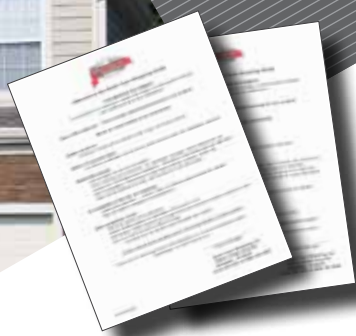
Workmanship Warranty:

No contractor will admit to sending out an incompetent installation staff. Workmanship warranties are implied, but rarely in writing. Reputable contractors give a workmanship warranty along with a manufactures product warranty. Home Town Restyling offers a 20-year workmanship warranty.

Permit:

Whoever purchases the permit is responsible for all Building Department code issues. Note: If the homeowner purchases the permit, it is their responsibility to comply with Building Department code requirements.

*****NOTICE: BUILDING CODE –** As a service to our customers, we obtain the building permit for you. Therefore it is our responsibility to inform you of the 2003 international residential building code, where if valuation of an addition or repair to a dwelling exceeds \$1,000, the entire building shall be provided with smoke detectors on per Section R313.1. R313.1 Smoke Alarms – One in each bedroom, one on each additional story of dwelling (including basement). These alarms can be the battery operated type.

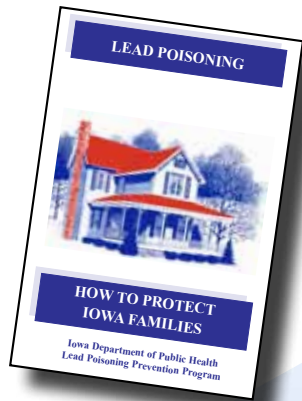


Professionalism

What's Next: A clearly written agenda explaining the order of events to take place over the coming weeks until the job is completed.

Right Of Rescission – Separate From Contract: This is a federal law designed to protect homeowners since 1974. It gives homeowners the right to cancel an order and get their deposit back in full to prevent shoddy sales tactics.

Lead Paint Laws Booklet: April 22, 2010 the (TSCA) Toxic Substance Control Act will require contractors to follow (LSWP) Lead Safe Work Practices on any home built before 1978. Contractors who do not follow these practices open themselves up to significant fines and civil and/or criminal enforcement action.



Physical Place of Business/Showroom: It's important before you make a buying decision to get the Address and City of your contractor. A lot of contractors will place an ad in the local yellow pages with only a local phone number making the contractor appear to be a local contractor. This phone number is forwarded to their place of business which could be miles away or even states away. If you run into installation problems, service issues, or warranty issues you will want to make sure your contractor is local. If not, your issues could go un-resolved for Months or even Years until they are back in 'your area'.



Local and or National

Recognition: Most experienced and reputable contractors may have received some type of National and/or Regional recognition. Ask to see if your contractor has received any such award recognition. Remember, the warranty is only as strong as the company standing behind it.

A large, tilted table listing various contractors. The table has multiple columns, including company names, addresses, phone numbers, and other details. The text is small and difficult to read, but it appears to be a directory or a list of contractors. The table is tilted at an angle, making it difficult to read the individual entries.

“The most expensive remodeling project is the one you have to do twice.”

Wayne. W. Winn
President/Owner



Website

Market research shows that today's consumer is looking for ease of doing business with a company, and wants a relationship with that company. He/she is looking for expert advice as well as ideas and answers. He/she wants to know as much about that company's product as they do, and MORE about the competitor's product.

How a company prepares for this new consumer will determine their long-term success. Online has officially taken over and is the new showroom. Consumers are looking for streaming video, testimonials, coupons or special offers, tax credit or rebate information, features and benefits on products, just to name a few examples. Companies un-willing to serve their customers online demands are destined to fall short in other areas.



I.C.C.G. Compliance Checklist

Reputation:			Contractor A	Contractor B
1.	Member of the Better Business Bureau	✓		
2.	Letters of Recommendation	✓		
3.	Registration with Home Builders Association	✓		
4.	Documentation of Paid Worker's Compensation (on installation staff)	✓		
Stability:				
1.	Insurance Certificate – not 'Self Insured'	✓		
2.	Lien Waivers	✓		
3.	Lead Paint Certification	✓		
Workmanship:				
1.	Detailed Written Proposal	✓		
2.	Workmanship Warranty in writing	✓		
3.	Permit	✓		
Professionalism:				
1.	A Clear Written Agenda (What's next?)	✓		
2.	Right of Rescission	✓		
3.	Lead Paint Laws and Booklet	✓		
4.	Physical Place of Business/Showroom	✓		
5.	Local and/or National Recognition	✓		
6.	Quality Website	✓		

Questions to Ask Your Remodeler



1205 N. Center Point Rd.
Hiawatha, IA 52233
(319) 378-1221 or (800) 397-0026
www.hometownrestyling.com

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