

## Hiring a Contractor Tip Sheet

1. Using a common language is the first step to ensuring you get what you want done. Make sure you and your contractor have a common understanding of the job to be done or quoted on. Get it in writing.
2. Ask friends and family for referrals, contact home services for a referral. Get at least 3 quotes.
3. When meeting with contractors, have a friend or family member with you. They may think of a question you should ask or help clear up a misunderstanding.
4. Check references with the Better Business Bureau and Internet review sites, such as Yelp and yellow pages online.
5. Review the quotes. Try and understand why they are different. If one is cheaper than another, ask yourself why. Is one contractor cutting corners on material? Is s/he less experienced?
6. The cheapest quote isn't always the best. Choose your contractor based on price, time estimated to complete the job, and the materials that will be used. Right the first time is better and cheaper in the long run.
7. Once you have chosen a contractor, agree on a written work plan.
8. Ask the contractor if they have insurances, Workers' Compensation Board coverage and work permits.
9. Set good boundaries. Be clear about which spaces in your home or yard are off limits.
10. Communicate regularly with the contractor and make sure changes are written down.
11. Don't "stew" about something you are not happy with. Speak to the contractor or worker right away.
12. If things have not gone well, try talking to the contractor first before threatening further action. Often you can reach a mutually agreeable compromise.
13. Whether you are happy or unhappy with the job, take the time to write a review or testimonial.
14. If things don't go well, talk to someone. You have a number of avenues to pursue a remedy. Even if you do not get full restitution, you can stop others from being taken advantage of.

### Seniors Home Supports Program

Adapted from a resource compiled by SEESA (South East Edmonton Seniors Association)