

If you are considering obtaining an Owner-Builder permit, you should be aware of the information contained in this handout. It is provided to you for your benefit and protection.

Unlicensed persons professing they are contractors frequently ask property owners to secure an “Owner/Builder” building permit, erroneously implying that the property owner is providing his or her own labor and material. In reality, building permits do not require a signature by the property owners unless they are performing their own work.

Anyone who talks you into being your own general contractor, or “Owner-Builder”, may be doing you a disservice. An “Owner-Builder” is a homeowner who becomes the general contractor for their project. As an “Owner-Builder”, you, not the person you hire, assumes responsibility for the overall job, which may include such experienced in construction, it is best to leave these matters to your contractor. **You should be aware that as an “Owner-Builder”, you are the responsible party of record on a permit.** If a permit is issued as an “Owner-Builder” permit, the City of Meniffee requires a signature by the owner only. Building Permits taken out by licensed Contractors, require the permit to be signed by the contractor. If anyone being performing the work other than yourself, you may protect yourself from possible liability if that person applies for the proper permit in his or her name.

By State Law Contractors are required to be licensed and bonded by the State of California and to have a business license from the City of Meniffee. They are also required by law to include their license number on all permits for which they apply. If a contractor hires one or more employees to work on your job, workers compensation insurance is required. As such, you may wish to require the contractor to furnish a certificate of workers compensation insurance coverage. State workers compensation law provides that an owner must pay for worksite-related injuries if a contractor is not insured.

One of the best ways to select a contractor is to seek personal recommendations from friends or relatives who have recently obtained work similar to that which you seek.

Additionally you should also:

1. Call the California Contractors State License Board (CSLB) to ask if the contractor is properly licensed, and the license is in good standing. (CSLB) 1-800-321-2752 or www.cslb.ca.gov
2. Ask the contractor for a list of jobs recently completed in the area. A skilled contractor should be proud of his/her work and should not mind providing this information.
3. Talk to the contractor’s customers. Ask such questions as:
 - Did the contractor keep to the schedule?
 - Were you pleased with the work and the way it was completed?
 - Did the contractor listen to you when you had a problem, and seem concerned about resolving it?
 - Did the contractor make any necessary corrections willingly?
4. See the work yourself whenever possible.
5. Obtain references from material suppliers, subcontractors and financial institutions, if possible to determine whether the contractor is financially responsible.
6. Acquire and verify the contractor’s business location and telephone number with the Building Department, trade association/union, consumer protection agency, and/or Better Business Bureau.

As your job progresses, the Building and Safety Department will make inspections to ensure, that completed work meets building codes. The inspector will not determine the quality of work performed. If possible, you should be present when the inspector inspects your project. Ask questions, and make frequent inspections yourself.



When a project is completed, the building department will conduct a final inspection. Make sure that you also conduct a final inspection, or “walk-through,” with your contractor to be certain there is nothing you or the contractor have overlooked.

In spite of all the precautions you have taken, problems may occur with the work done on your home. If problems do occur, either during construction or after completion, contact your contractor. Usually, he/she will make corrections willingly.

Should the contractor refuse to make corrections, you can file a complaint in writing with your local Contractors State License Board office, Building and Safety Department, or if necessary, consult an attorney. Personnel from the Contractors State License Board is available to report on the license status of any licensed California contractor and will answer inquiries as to any disciplinary action taken against a contractor by the Board. They will also assist with, and investigate, all valid complaints a consumer may have against a contractor.

