

Avoid some common potentially costly home contracting mistakes

HPS advises: Get it in writing

1. With a valid licensed contractor you get all the state mandated protection and even help and the recovery fund if the worst happens. But often you may feel rushed into choosing anyone or the first one because some work needs to be done, or, someone may rush you into saying yes because they are offering a so-called great deal if you agree today.

2. Assuming a handyman or so-called contractor, but without a license, knows everything about the project or jobs you have for them, ask them if they have experience on specifics of your project ... not generalities, but specifics. Insist on and check references; if he or she gives you a business card with a contractor's company name and license

number — call that company to be sure they are still employed, and, if not, why not. Watch out particularly for people walking your street door to door with a clipboard and saying they are doing your neighbor's project. Check and doublecheck who you choose to do business with.

3. Don't make verbal deals. It must be in writing.

4. Make a list of all the little things you can think of for your handyman list, or even for details about a bigger project. You usually always get "more bang for the buck" that way. Separating a kitchen or bath remodeling into separate cabinets, counters, flooring, painting, plumbing, electrical etc. bids or bidders usually never saves money and makes your job very hard to do the necessary co-ordination.

5. On repairs and bigger projects watch out for



Gerald Peters is president and general manager of HPS.

"low ball" "base" pricing to get you hooked, but then you get add-ons and more add-ons for things you thought were included. Unforeseen damage, clearly spelled out in ad-

vance, is a legitimate add-on, but only when it is really necessary. On the other hand, keep in mind, you as a client, cannot add

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things in that weren't discussed.

6. Don't make the final payment until you have reviewed the so-called "punch list" of final little things with your handyman or contractor and they have been completed.

7. The "secret" on how to save money on kitchen and bath upgrades and remodels? Always try to keep the water supply, drains, and electrical service just where they are. Concentrate on the removal and replacement of worn out or old-fashioned looking vanities, mirrors, medicine chests, shower and floor tile, sinks, faucets and other fixtures which can be "plugged right in." Don't be talked into unnecessary major realignments unless you are expanding the area in

question, and even then, you may still be able to avoid costly "major surgery" by getting a contractor who knows design as well as construction and renovation.

HPS Construction Services, Ltd. can be reached at 847-4400; Web sites are hurricaneprotect.com and hpsconstructionservices.com; Gerald Peters is President/General Manager of HPS and also content producer and co-host of Fixitfridays radio on The Mike Buck Show. Fridays 3-4 p.m. on AM830 KHVH and Oceanic Channel 881, repeats at 6-7 p.m.

Baths

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it could be a great way you can help to save our environment. All Island Bath Remodeling has restored more than 30,000 tubs during the past 20 years.

If you were to stack them up one on another, that would stand more than 5.5 miles high. And as Kakugawa points out, his company has eliminated a huge amount of waste that would normally have gone into Oahu's landfill.

The goal of All Island Bath Remodeling is to give kama'aina cost effective alternatives that could save

them money. Among the innovative products are granite-like painted surfaces for counter tops and walk-through cut-out bathtubs for the disabled.

It also offers tub and wall liners, which can transform bathroom tubs and walls in one day — without the "down time" normally associated with standard remodeling.

"In addition, we have a friendly family-style staff, all of whom are happy to provide Island homeowners with free advice and free estimates," Kakugawa says.

For more information, call 358-7780, send an email to Allislandbath@gmail.com or log on to www.Allislandbath.com



All Island Bath Remodeling helps restore tubs.