



# Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Sheriff Larry Ashley



## SCAM ALERT!

### Beware Contractor Con Artists

Contractor fraud continues to be a problem in our community; but if you do your homework you can prevent fraud. The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office advises consumers to take the time to thoroughly check out contractors and use this checklist to ensure a safer contracting experience.

- Be wary of contractors that contact you door-to-door or by telephone; especially those offering **bargains, scare tactics, or immediate service.**
- Get at **least three bids** and don't necessarily choose the lowest bid. You'll probably get what you paid for and you may not be happy.
- Do **NOT** do business with an unlicensed contractors. Check the contractor's license with your local building department and the Department of Business & Professional Regulations (DBPR) at <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/>
- Get a reliability report from the Better Business Bureau (BBB) at [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)
- Get and check at least three customer references.
- Insist on a **written contract that details the work** to be done and includes the cost of materials used with the start and completion dates.
- Pay minimal upfront for the cost of materials as stated in the contract. **Do not pay in cash.** Pay by check only and make sure everything is documented on all paper work. Including on the check provided.
- Pay in full only when **1) the job is complete 2) you're satisfied 3) you've received a "lien waiver" showing the contractor has paid sub contractors and suppliers and 4) an inspector has signed off on the job (if required .)**

**CASE**  
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Okaloosa County  
Sheriff's Office  
Fraud & Scam Hotline at  
850-651-7674

