



# Valley Home Builders Association

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## HOME OWNERS URGED TO BE CAUTIOUS IN HIRING REPAIR CONTRACTORS FOLLOWING STORMS

**APPLETON, WI: August 3, 2010** – Valley Home Builders Association (VHBA) urges home owners to use caution when approached by contractors offering to do home repairs following recent storms.

“Professional builders and remodelers will present evidence of their credentials without hesitation,” said VHBA President Mike Gibbons, GTS Construction. “Consumers should ask contractors to present their Dwelling Contractor Certification and Dwelling Contractor Qualifier certification cards provided by the WI Dept. of Commerce. We need to work together to ensure that our communities are not victimized by fraudulent ‘fly-by-night’ contractors.”

Gibbons encourages home owners to “look to the resources of your local builder association for names of qualified contractors that have established roots in your community.” In addition, recent rules enforced by the WI Department of Health Services also require contractors disturbing as little as six-square feet in pre-1978 homes carry a Lead Safe Renovator certification.

Home owners should be cautious of these common tactics used by less-reputable contractors, particularly those who come into communities following storms:

- You’re told that on this job, a contract “won’t be necessary.”
- You’re asked to pay for the entire job “up front” — or pay cash to a salesperson instead of a check or money order to a company.
- You are confronted with scare tactics, intimidation or threats.
- You’re told you’ve been “chosen” as a demonstration project at a special, low price.
- You’re told a “special” low price is good only if you sign a contract today.
- The contractor won’t give you reference — or the references can’t be located.
- You can’t verify the contractor’s business address.

VHBA suggests keeping the following advice in mind if you need to hire a contractor to perform repairs on any part of your home or business:

- Ask the contractor to present his/her Dwelling Contractor Certification and Dwelling Contractor Qualifier Certification cards provided by the Wisconsin Department of Commerce. These are required to pull building permits in Wisconsin.
- If any remodeling is done, ask to see the contractor's Lead Safe Renovator certification or proof of attendance at an accredited course.
- Research how long the contractor has been in business.
- Make sure you get a complete, clearly written contract for any work to be done. Do not rely on verbal agreements. All changes to the job should be put in writing before they occur.
- Do not pay any cash up front unless you have signed a valid contract.

Valley Home Builders Association consists of more than 700 local professionals working in all areas of residential construction and remodeling and related fields. For a complete list of VHBA members, visit [www.vhba.com](http://www.vhba.com) and select "Find a Member."

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*Valley Home Builders Association (VHBA), a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit trade organization, represents the land development, home building, remodeling and housing-related industries, as well as homeowners, in the greater Fox Cities area of Wisconsin. The Association consists of more than 725 member companies which employ more than 8,000 people who live and work in the local area. VHBA promotes professional business and construction practices among its members who work to enhance the quality of life in the Fox Valley. For more information, visit [www.vhba.com](http://www.vhba.com) or call 920-731-7931.*