



www.stlrehabbersclub.com

Sponsored by Metropolis St. Louis at www.mstl.org

The St. Louis Rehabbers Club, supported by Metropolis St. Louis, has compiled this list to assist residents in finding contractors to meet their particular needs. The list makes no claim to be comprehensive nor do we guarantee the quality of the services provided. Each contractor listed appears because of personal recommendations from participants of the Rehabbers Club listserve. We strongly suggest this list be used only as a resource, and fully expect homeowners using it do their own research, contact the Better Business Bureau, check references, and ask friends before selecting a contractor for their project. Oh, and never, ever, ever, ever pay a contractor in full for a project before work has started. To correct inaccuracies or to make additions, please email the listserve at rehabbersclub@yahoogroups.com.

IN THE BEGINNING

ARCHITECTS & PROJECT DESIGNERS

American Institute of Architects	621-3484
Paul Fendler, Fendler & Associates	664-7725
Klitzing Welsch Associates	772-8073
The Lawrence Group	231-5700
John MacGoy	968-3287
Ida Siegfried	367-4327
Pyramid Architects [Steve Wilke-Shapiro]	621-8545

STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS/SURVEYING

James Engineering & Surveying [Larry Wurm]	822-1006
William Forsyth Engineering	621-7380
Kent McPeak [McGinnis Assoc.]	469-6460
Leo Turek [Brucker Engineering]	961-4495
Pitzman's Company	781-5665
TL Consultants [Ted Laneman]	772-4346

GENERAL CONTRACTORS [see guide for hiring a GC, page 9]

Bob's Home Service	862-3414
Bonded Construction	427-5700
Braden Construction	618-236-9796
City Lights [Randy Middeke]	771-7681
City Restoration, Inc.	421-0017
CREW Construction [Rich Wurm]	776-7224
DGH Services [Dan Hudspeth]	726-0653
Eisen Contracting	952-8785
Hush Harbor Construction	772-4874
[Carey Hammett, foreman]	724-7569
Kohnen Craftsmanship [Mark Kohnen]	397-2299
	772-1574
Kuhn Construction	966-5846
	cell 650-0266
Midwest Corporate Services, Inc. [Mike]	691-1152
or [Lane Foreman]	691-1153
Paul Pagano*	494-1512
Patrick Moore Construction*	535-5000
Reliable Home Repair [Bob Austin]	544-3202
	544-4009
River City Construction	636-225-4707

Roth Contracting	772-0842
Ruggeri Construction [David]	277 5869
SCX	768-2424
Stevenson/Stevenson	776-1479
	pager 855-8260
Therrien Group	477-8966
Trinity Contracting	655-1200

LEAD-TESTING CONTRACTORS

Charlie Norris	565-5120
TSI Engineering	664-3134

HANDYMAN/WOMAN

A Fast Repair Co.	360-2020
A Woman's Touch Remodeling	229-4600
[Ronda Pashia-Fohey]	
B&B Handyman	865-1108,
	559-2024
Al Camden	960-7425
Doug the Handyman*	776-0597
	cell 494-3300
Have Tools, Will Travel [Jo]	490-2400
House Doctors	514-0055
Human Brothers	423-8668
Marilyn Lancaster	865-0885
Robert Robinson	771-7091
Curt Saale	636-899-0815
Albert Stemmler	
Dennis Waller	432-0010

DAY LABORER

Herb Walters	636-938-5277
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OUTSIDE THE BOX

CONCRETE

Busher Brothers*	771-1413
Custom Concrete Design	843-5902
Joseph Cement	351-0700
Bob King Concrete*	645-1608
	mobile 307-2949

CONCRETE (continued)

Sam Johnson	636-586-2589
L&S Concrete [John Lyons]	718-0719
Ron Sansone	636-271-4844
St. Louis Resurfacing	576-9220
TAC Construction [Joe Bongiorno]	704-8910

EXPOSED AGGREGATE

Badgett Construction* [Arnold Badgett]	575-0895
Buscher Brothers Concrete	771-1413
Mark Cygan	636-256-8092

GARAGES

Cornerstone Garages [Scott Murphy]	495-8248
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GUTTERS

Aluminum Gutter & Materials [Ron Wibbenmeyer]	849-7770
Berkel Sheet Metal	781-2702
John Fletcher	961-7622
Frederic Roofing	645-2000
The Gutter Doctor	892-6732
Jeffco Gutters	636-343-6723
K&M Exteriors	636-931-6373
Steve's Gutters	846-1927

COPPER GUTTERS

Hopmann Cornice	241-4129
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LAWN CARE/TREE TRIMMING

Arbor Tree Service	771-4935
Declue & Sons Tree Service	968-9944
Design Lawn Care [Mel Purnell]	636-916-1566
KV Tree Service	725-7677
Sunshine Landscaping Service:	837-7071
Whispering Meadows [Ben Osterberg]	241-2759

PAINTING

Alliance Contracting [Tony Thomas]	768-2333
Beckner Painting Midwest	646-7000
Celtic Painting	436-7407
Roger Douek (Mary Krummenacher)	862-6871
J&S Painting	961-8288
Koch Brothers Decorating	862-8383
M&S Painting	638-9903
Raven Painting	429-0848

Rembrandt Painting	664-2436
Schlueter Painting	544-5126
Albert Stemmler	
Andy Vogel	481-4298

HISTORICAL COLORS CONSULTANT

Dr. Robert Schweitzer	robs@umich.edu
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PAINT REMOVAL/STRIPPING/REFINISHING

Strip Clean*	772-2167
Prott Brothers	773-7400
Romo Restoration [Bert Romo]	680-7528

ROOFING

B&C Slate and Tile	768-2960
Gary Beachler	636-274-5108
John Beal	638-1400
Al Camden	960-7425
Conway Roofing	544-8148
Cotton's Roofing	721-7361
Eckrich Roofing	752-9200
Fritsch Roofing [John & Ann Fritsch]	752-3350
Gateway Roofing [Ray Davison]	721-7282
A&R Hill Roofing [Alan Hill]	636-296-5772
Kirberg Roofing	534-4444
Mississippi Valley Roofing	838-4451
Old World Roofing	966-7916
Petko's Roofing Co [Raymond Petko]	773-2893
Reliable Home Repair [Bob Austin]	544-3202, 544-4009
St. Louis City Roofing [George Turner]	865-1985
Doug Stephens	220-4973
VRIE Services [Mike Brandes]	229-0878
M. Walter Roofing Co.	664-3858

TUCKPOINTING/MASONRY

Certified Waterproofing	352-2080
Ken Clark Tuckpointing	771-1952
Steve Gress Tuckpointing*	645-8991
Patrick Fitzgerald	638-0097
Heine Brothers Tuckpointing	636-464-5742
Ray Middleton*	353-6323
	cell 486-2697
Owen Tuckpointing	771-7070
Richardson Brick Masonry [Bill Richardson]	636-931-0400
	636-931-0403

TUCKPOINTING/MASONRY (continued)

Sturgis Tuckpointing & Brick* [Clint Horn]	773-4801
..... cell	393-3632
White National Tuckpointing	494-7200

WINDOWS - REPLACEMENT

Anderson	524-4411
Berry Door & Window	984-4999
Bryn Mawr II Windows	849-7782
Empire Supply	645-2633
Exteriors by Roesch	481-2212
Top View [Jeanette Zheng]	890-2388
Wilke Window & Door	963-9000

THE INSIDE STORY

CARPENTRY (most General Contractors have their own carpenters)

A Fast Repair Company	360-2020
Tim Burnside	503-1383
Glenn's Home Repair	773-0477
David Grassi Construction	776-5699
John Hancock	636-227-6152
Moss Construction	353-0991
Brian Plummer	772-2446
Dan Redmond	636-394-6525
River City Carpentry & Woodworking, Inc.*	772-7751
St. Louis Carpentry	968-0635

DRYWALL (may also call any General Contractor)

A&A Plaster and Drywall	727-5200
Anderson Drywall	846 1987
Bender Drywall	426-3736
K&M Painting and Drywall.	845-6784
McCoy Drywall [large jobs only]	636-296-4644
REI	276-6732
Sextro	369-3864

ELECTRIC

Bates Electric	464-3939, 432-7883
CSE [Greg Zigrang-Estimator]	cell 486-0748
Fielder Electric*	966-3388
Gardner Electric*	892-5939
Joe Manion	349-5125
Rosco Electric	862-1115
Southwestern Electric* [Tom Frisella]	776-5252

Stephenson Electric	772-6363
Target Electric [Mike Mantia]	636-861-7177
Volz Electric	832-3070
Universal Electric*	352-4142

FLOOR REFINISHING

Matt Peary	771-2873
Blake Floor Co.* [Emil Blake]	664-9007
Burke Floor Co. [Pat Burke]	631-5355
Elliott Flooring [Ken, Darren or Chad]	636-528-6334
H.P. Flooring [Matt Piry]	771-2873
Lawson Brothers	371-4400
Mattingly Floors	427-4582

HVAC

AA Air Conditioning [John]	800-818-5853
Dave Bennet	636-343-9999
..... cell	805-7799
C&G Heating & Cooling [Carol Gottlieb]	645-0535
Climate Masters	968-8383
Crystal Heating & Cooling	636-931-3546
Donahue Heating & Air Conditioning	991-1137
Droste Heating & Cooling	383-6902
Fahy's Heating & Cooling [Dennis Fahy]	645-2222
Gaines HVAC, Inc.*	772-5550
Gateway Comfort Systems [Ed Meyer]	636-942-4081
Andre & Greg Gura	496-8416
Hayes Heating & Cooling [John Hayes]	636-464-5302
..... cell	276-0902
Hi Pointe Heating & Cooling [Robin]	772-5277
Hoffmann Brothers	664-3011
Mertens Heating & Cooling	771-6665
Morgner Air Conditioning & Heating	961-0875
Peak Heating & Cooling	773-7661
Ryan Heating & Cooling	352-1111
Seliga Heating & Cooling	481-7333
Sunset Air Company [Nick]	849-0145
Vogel*	351-2533

KITCHENS & BATHS

Capitol Group	772-8400
Lifestyle Kitchens & Baths	963-1700
Modern Kitchens & Baths	772-1611
William A. Rose	962-8291

KITCHENS & BATHS (continued)

RSI	644-5500
George Votruba Contracting	838-9710

PLASTER

A&A Plaster and Drywall	727-5200
Barr Brothers	846-6349
Champs Plastering [Raynard Haynes]	533-4388
..... cell	517-7373
Gianino Plastering	752-0136
Plastering Systems	846-6995
Professional Plastering [Bob Meinz]	638-2245
Jerry Sextro*	369-3864
John Steurer Plastering	822-9030

PLUMBING

Always Reasonable Plumbing	941-1590
Aries Plumbing*	351-2302
B&M Plumbing	894-2783
Banner Plumbing	351-3500
Bourgeois Plumbing Co. [Matt]	636-464-7579
First Call Plumbing [Dave & Corey Reddick]	776-0143
Full Service Plumbing [Mike Rabbit]	664-7684
Dependable Plumbing	781-9188
Dierkes Plumbing	664-1916
Dizdar Plumbing	832-8202
Hoffmann Plumbing [Mark]	772-3559
Mayo Plumbing [Jerry Mayo]	636-677-0608
Midwest Drain Cleaning [Bill Rowland]	638-6700
Van Plumbing	892-5099
Zanka Plumbing	353-3730

WOOD FINISHING

Burkart's Woodworks*	771-7727
John Hinrichs & Son	382-2500
Sue Wheeler	367-6054

WOOD MILLING/PLANING/TURNING

Burkart's Woodworks*	771-7727
Fehlig Bros. Box & Lumber Co	241-6900
Gravois Planing Mill	776-2800
Messing Planing Mills* 5020 Arsenal	664-3544
St. Louis Stair & Wood Works	644-6625
St. Louis Woodworks	773-4800

Simon's Total Carpentry Service	968-2566
Wood Innovations	771-0874

SECURITY SERVICES

LOCKSMITHS

A-All Lock & Key Company	351-3131
Able Key & Service*	367-3500
ABC Key & Door	869-4950
Abbot Lock & Key	367-7292
Bates Street Lock Shop	351-7252
Krause Key & Lock Service*	752-3311
Heuer Locksmiths	361-6116
..... downtown	436-1116

SECURITY MONITORING SYSTEMS

ADT	800-238-3009
Brink's	800-669-3261
Eagle Security	427-3926
Missouri Digital	524-1154
Nighthawk Security	846-4600
Security Link	877-201-8647

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

APPRAISERS/PROPERTY INSPECTORS

Brewer Inspection Services	636-391-0091
Cardinal Appraisal [Scott]	872-8000
Emmenegger Sauter	636-230-5559
[Steve Sauter or Robert Emmenegger]	
Iota Appraisals	534-8163
McDavid Real Estate Advisors*	726-0200
[Joe McDavid]	
Metro Home Inspectors [Mike Boyd]	918-8600
St. Louis Appraisal [Jean Friscella]	849-9913
Richard Tegethoff	968-1201
Catherine Turner	636-300-1029

ATTORNEYS-REAL ESTATE/TAX LAW

Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis	
[Lawyer Referral Service]	421-4134
Elia Ellis [Nodiff & Ellis]	727-8989
Tim Jones [Doster Mickes James & Ullom]	636-532-0042
Launhardt & Associates [Greg Launhardt]	842-1313
Joanna Owens [contract law]	721-7717
James Whal	421-3100

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (continued)

CPAs

Launhardt & Associates [Terri Launhardt] 842-1313
Lloyd Naes 621-7773

FINANCING /MORTGAGE LOANS

Conventional Loans/Refinancing

Compass Mortgage [Jason Palliser, x118] 439-9999
Confidence Mortgage [Jeff, ext.208] 842-1444
Cornerstone Mortgage [Kathy Duckworth] . . cell 540-3231
Loanscapes [Amy Doll] 776-6100
Mainline Mortgage [Dennis Cregan] 645-6246
Justine Petersen Housing [Judy Notestine] 664-5051
Pride Mortgage [Mike Fortman] 983-9100
Pulaski Bank [Fred Elkins, x3577] 878-3523
Also recommended: Mark Baron, Rich Blum, Jennifer Hoeber

Rehab Loans

Loanscapes 776-6100
Allegiant Bank [Craig Schreier] 587-7708
Lindell Bank & Trust [Jim Seitz, x3840] 645-7700

Rental Property

Tim Hunter [First National Bank] 746-4626
Colette Letendre [Royal Bank] 212-1645

Small Business

Loanscapes [Jan McAllister] 754-1211

203K Loans

Toni Collins [Wells Fargo] 506-2746

INSURANCE CARRIERS

Affiliated Insurance Agencies [Shawn McBride] . . . 731-1400
Agent's Insurance* [Mark Riordan] 966-5588
Allstate [Bill Kennedy] 821-5833
American Family [Debbie Miller] 432-3221
Best Choice Insurance* [Mike Boone] 731-1400
Beyond Housing/Neighborhood 533-0600
Housing Services [Eric Madkins, x10]
Charles Crane Agency [Donna Thomure] 444-4991
Clayton-Hanley Insurance [Tony Palazzolo] 487-2921
Farmer's Insurance [Mrs. Brooks] 758-4848
Fireman's Fund 569-7300
Dave Wenzel 636-394-1747

REAL ESTATE AGENTS [specializing in promoting city living]

Margaret Bruno 227-8533
Laura Costello [King Realty] 776-6279

Marti Frumhoff [Coldwell Banker Premier] . . . cell 468-6373
Laura Henneke [Coldwell Banker Premier] 336-1920
Erin Jameson [St Louis Premier Realtors] . . . office 241-0008
. cell 280-2233
Mary Krummenacher [Re/Max] 249-4534
Kellie Landacker [Keller Williams Realty] 443-3220
Brian Magill [Re/Max] 922-7403
Connie Petty [Re/Max] office 351-7897
. cell 609-4152
Kris Scott [St. Louis Premier Realtors] 241-0008
Tiffany Torrento [Re/Max] 276-3278

THE ICING

ARCHITECTURAL SALVAGE

Architectural Artifacts* (formerly After the Paint) . . . 771-4442
Architectural Accents 644-3515
Rick Dulaney & Scott Rigg 217-223-0481
located in Quincy, Illinois
Fellenz Antiques 367-0214
Perhats Lumber 481-9302
The Resource 567-5041
. 962-1173
The ReStore (benefits Habitat For Humanity) 531-4155
Riverside Antiques 772-9177
St. Louis Architectural Art [Larry Giles] 773-2264

CERAMIC TILE

Ceramic Tile Services 647-5132

GRANITE, MARBLE & STONE

Global Granite & Marble 426-1466
Sachs Steel & Supply [stone lintels] 725-8364

PAINTING-FAUX/TROMPE L'OEIL/SCENIC

Laurie Dyche 781-5525
Cliff Gokenbach 314-776-2929
. cell 494-8494

STAINED GLASS

Art Glass Creations 832-6410
Art Glass Unlimited 361-0474
Artistic Glassworks 867-6202
Cosby Art Glass 962-4817
Mithra Glassworks 865-3877

STAINED GLASS (continued)

Preston Art Glass Studio 353-2611
Stained Glass Creations 968-4112

TIN CEILINGS

W.F. Norman Corp. 800-641-4038
214 N. Cedar, P.O. Box 323, Nevada, MO 64772

TUB REGLAZING

AAA Missouri Tub & Tile [Fletcher] 636-230-0011
..... cell 568-4836
Gateway Porcelain Refinishers 631-7788
[Ted & Margo Soucy] 630-2024

WROUGHT IRON

Classic Metal Craft 535-2022
Missouri Ornamental Iron 725-4870

WHERE TO FIND IT

Appliances: Buy New, Used or Repair

B&J Appliances [Cathy] 868-8186
Convenient Appliance 831-5377
Jones Appliance 353-9409

Asphalt Paving & Sealing:

Topps Asphalt Sealing & Paving 739-3993

Bird Roosting Deterrent: Nixalite metal spikes

Sure-Shot Pest Control 776-5455

Brick/Pavers: (used)

Century Brick 843-1213

Cabinetry:

Apple City 800-779-6630
1 Apple City Center Road, Murphysboro, IL 62966
Capitol Kitchen and Bath 351-4900
Timberlake Cabinet Company 636-947-9566
[Randy Dawson]

Clay Roofing Tiles: (used)

Kirberg Roofing 534-4444
Perhat Lumber 481-9302
St. Louis Architectural Art [Larry Giles] 773-2264

Drains:

Midwest Drain Cleaning Equipment 638-6700

Drywall: 1/4-inch

RM Supply Company 298-7272
River City Drywall 636-441-9657

Dumpsters:

Crown Disposal 644-4200
Matchbox Hauling 645-7400
Midwest Waste* [Angela] 621-1853
Specialized Container Services [Robert] ... 636-529-0029

Electrical (supplier-floor outlets and other items)

Holt Electric [John Magee] 647-4658

Exterminators/Termite Inspectors:

Rose Exterminators 845-6101
Sure Shot Pest Control 776-5455

Fabricators: Staircase railings

Foreman Fabricators, Inc. 771-1717

Flooring: Bamboo

Stockton Heartwoods* 352-2537
Elliott Flooring 636-528-6334
[Ken, Darren or Chad]

Flooring: Tile Dealers

Ceramic Tile Services 647-5132
European Tile & Marble Co.* 533-3366
Hoods on Manchester near Sam's
St. Louis Tile & Carpet 909-0130
Tile Source 647-5255

Flooring: Carpet Dealers

Becky's Carpet & Tile [multiple locations]
Carpet N More 352-0870
Carpet Remnant Warehouse 544-1210
JJS Flooring & Decorating* 772-3996
Lawson Brothers* 371-4400
Legacy Flooring 283-0465
Loomworks 361-7979
Midwest Floor 647-6060

WHERE TO FIND IT (continued)

Flooring: Carpet Installers

John Beck	351-2525
Carpet Resource	636-227-8545
Colonial Carpet	726-3281
JJS Flooring & Decorating*	772-3996
Pete Kelly	837-3130
John Nickless	740-0915
.....	pager 636-818-0280

Furniture Refinisher/Repair:

Dale Dufer	664-6009
Zollinger Furniture	832-1555

Glass: Beveled, Hammered, Tempered

Chippewa Glass and Mirrow	752-3456
Hegger & Sons Glass	776-2313

Glass: Replacement

Gravois Glass	352-2200
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Hardware Stores located in the City:

Joseph Becker Wallpaper & Paint	533-0486
2515 North Grand	
Downtown Hardware & Locksmiths	436-1116
1100 Locust	
Edele & Mertz Ace Hardware	421-2131
1882 South Broadway	
Empire Supply	645-2633
7286 Manchester	
Hanneke Hardware	772-5120
5390 Southwest	
Kingsbury Square Hardware	361-7111
515 DeBaliviere	
Liberty Hardware	773-3520
3827 South Broadway	
Marcus Hardware	383-7574
2815 Marcus Street	
Mardel True Value Hardware	647-4747
3425 Watson Road	
Marx Hardware & Paint	231-8435
2501 North 14th	
New Market Hardware	371-1720
4064 Laclede	
Norrenberns Lumber & Hardware	781-3450
7201 Lansdowne	
Oak Hill Hardware & Paint Co	776-0741
4100 Connecticut	

Revs-Recon	533-4303
2730 North Grand	
St. Louis Shade & Hardware	371-5430
408 North Sarah	
Southside True Value Hardware	351-0204
6401 Hampton Avenue	
Southwest Building Center	752-9700
3761 Bates	
Tower Grove Ace Hardware	773-7149
1626 Tower Grove Avenue	
Virginia Hardware Store	352-0656
4539 Virginia	

Light Fixtures: (vintage, rewired, restored)

Don Rutlege	351-2422
.....	302-1162
St. Louis Antique Lighting	863-1414

Lighting Design:

Randy Burkett Lighting & Design	961-6650
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Lumber:

Burkart's Woodworks*	771-7727
Fehlig Brothers Box and Lumber Co.	241-6900
Norrenbern's Lumber & Hardware	781-3450
[cedar clapboard siding]	
Wood Innovations	771-0874

Mirrors: Custom Cutting

Hegger & Sons Glass	776-2313
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Tuckpointing Supplies:

F.W.Clemens	776-0195
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Moving & Storage:

Russell Moving & Storage	771-3072
.....	771-3111
Two Men and a Truck	963-7766

Plaster: Bulk

Raineri Building Material	781-1573
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Pocket Door Tracks & Sheaves:

Laciny Bros., Inc	862-8330
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WHERE TO FIND IT (continued)

Property Management:

Brenda [Virginia Avenue Properties] 771-3301
Ken Rengel [Rengel Realtors] 960-9997
..... 832-9300

Recycling:

City of St. Louis Refuse Division 353-8877
4100 South First Street, 63118
Aluminum cans, steel cans, newspapers, cardboard, office paper,
glass containers, milk jugs, soda bottles, motor oil, car batteries,
ferrous and non-ferrous metals.
American Iron & Metal 421-4860
3945 N. Broadway
Aluminum cans, auto batteries, scrap aluminum, lead,
stainless steel, copper, brass and appliances.
S. Fenster & Sons 382-3800
7550 N. Broadway
Aluminum cans, steel (tin) food cans, scrap aluminum, copper,
brass, stainless steel, lead, and auto batteries.

Rental: Tools and Equipment

NuWay [60' ladders] 544-1214
We-Rent-It [wet saw to cut marble] 772-4227

Safety Equipment

Colt Safety Christine Bierman 961-4414

Salvage: General, Industrial

Jay's Hydraulic & Electric 436-4111
Missouri Transformer & Switch 231-3115
Shapiro Supply Company 382-7000

Sewer Camera Service:

Midwest Drain Cleaning Equipment 638-6700
[Bill Rowland]

Sharpening Mower Blades:

Southside Mower Repairs 776-8238
Southside True Value Hardware (Steve) 351-0204

Windows:

Select Window & Door 423-3420

The End

[for now]

Want to get on the list?

If you'd like to be listed on our very prestigious contractor's list, you can, but as usual, there are rules:

- 1) We prefer city-based businesses (but do not exclude contractors and resources because of location).
- 2) A recommendation must come from a member or members of the Rehabbers Club who have purchased services from the company they want to recommend or are willing to vouch for the work done by that company. A company cannot recommend itself. That is called advertising.

All folks submitting new recommendations, please provide the following:

complete business name and general category
contact person [optional]
phone number

Because of space restraints, we are not listing addresses unless a business is located out of town.

What is a General Contractor and Should I Hire One?

A general contractor is someone you hire to coordinate a home improvement project. Although most will take on any sort of project, they are normally used for larger projects or in cases where there are multiple projects to be completed. Traditionally general contractors will have some workers on their payroll to handle demolition, carpentry, electric, plumbing, and other basics; for everything else they will hire various subcontractors, or "subs" (the balance of subs to staff varies). Often times, they will have a relationship with certain subs whom they know and trust. Using a general contractor instead of "subbing out" the work yourself will usually cost you more; 10-20% on average. Though in some cases it may actually cost less than doing it yourself, particularly if you don't get multiple bids when hiring subs, but also because the staff can often do certain jobs for less than subs.

There are, however, a number of advantages to hiring a general contractor. **First**, it makes larger, more complex projects more manageable, since you can leave many of the details to someone else (finding subs, making sure the work is done and done right, paying the sub, etc.). **Second**, experience in coordinating some of the more general aspects of projects can be very valuable (e.g. knowing which parts of a project need to happen in what order, when and how to get permits, issues of licensing/bonding, etc.). **Finally**, since general contractors have established relationships with certain subs, providing them with regular business, it is not uncommon for a general contractor to be quietly bumped up on the schedule of projects (they want to keep the general contractor happy). In short, a general contractor can make a project move faster and with less heartache for you.

If you do decide to use a general contractor, be sure to check references, get multiple bids, and get a very specific, itemized cost breakdown as part of the contract. It is customary to add 5-15% to a bid to cover unforeseen costs. But any use of this "contingency fund" should be formally approved by you—the best way is to use a "change order" form, so you have it in writing. Note that if you plan on getting a loan to do a major project, the lender will often require that you hire an experienced general contractor, unless you can demonstrate substantial experience in the field.

Good luck!

The Rehabbers Club wishes to thank Rick Hunter
for writing this very useful article and sharing it with us.