



# CONSUMER EDUCATION SERIES

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Word Count: 409  
(Including title)

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## Who's That Knocking at Your Door?

When greeted by salespeople canvassing your neighborhood, be sure to ask who they represent and if the company or contractor is licensed with the Contractors State License Board ([CSLB](#)). CSLB licenses and regulates California's 290,000 contractors in 44 different [classifications](#). Remember that any home improvement project costing \$500 or more in combined labor and materials must be performed by a state-licensed contractor.

No matter how enthusiastic or insistent the salesperson may be, don't agree to purchase goods or services until you confirm that the person is either the licensed contractor or is registered (without restrictions) as a home improvement salesperson ([HIS](#)) with CSLB and is authorized to act on behalf of his or her employer. A registered salesperson must be able to display the HIS registration pocket card, when asked, to identify their employment status with the contractor.

Only a registered HIS can solicit, sell, negotiate, or execute home improvement contracts for the sale, installation, or furnishing of home improvement goods or services for a licensed contractor outside of the contractor's normal place of business. A registered HIS has met state registration requirements and undergone a criminal background review.

CSLB recommends that you avoid making on-the-spot decisions to sign a contract that will obligate you to make a large home improvement contract. Take the time to read all information, compare like products, and be sure you completely understand the contract before you sign it.

Remember:

- ✓ Check the contractor license number or HIS status at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) or call CSLB's toll-free line: 800.321.CSLB (2752).
- ✓ Ask for and check the contractor's references before you sign a contract.
- ✓ Get at least three bids.
- ✓ Remember that a down payment cannot be more than 10% of the contract price or \$1,000, whichever is less (unless the contractor has a "blanket performance and payment bond" on file with CSLB).
- ✓ You have a three-day right to cancel the contract (this information should be part of the contract language) if it was negotiated at your residence and not at the contractor's place of business. Also, the three-day right to cancel does not apply to contracts involving home repairs after a declared natural disaster, contracts with alarm companies and alarm agents, and service and repair contracts of \$750 or less for work that is needed immediately.

If you have a fraud concern or complaint, you can call CSLB or fill out and mail in the online [Complaint form](#).

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