

City of Coral Gables  
Building and Zoning Department

**Frequently Called Numbers:**

Owner/Builder Representative	305-569-1803
General Information	305-460-5265
Plans Status	305-460-5246
Inspections Desk	305-460-5245
Zoning Technicians	305-460-5254
	305-460-5253
	305-569-1805
Electrical Official	305-460-5255
Mechanical Official	305-460-5243
Plumbing Official	305-460-5258
Microfilm	305-460-5262
Board of Architects	305-460-5238
Construction Reg. Board	305-460-5228
Board of Adjustment	305-460-5240
Code Enforcement	305-460-5226
B & Z Director	305-460-5227
Asst. Director - Zoning	305-460-5241
Asst. Director - Building	305-460-5244
Zoning Administrator	305-460-5240
Fax (Permit)	305-460-5261
Fax (Code Enforce)	305-460-5348
Fax (Inspections Desk)	305-569-1827

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Please have your permit or application number available when calling.

**Summary**

Your selection of a contractor is one of the most important choices you will make regarding your proposed project. The success of your project will depend on the ability of the contractor to provide the best construction at a good price and within a reasonable time frame. Developing a good contract, planning for all phases of construction and following the guidelines in this brochure should help you have your project completed to your satisfaction.

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This publication can be made available in large print, tape cassette, or Braille, upon request.

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**CORAL GABLES CITY COMMISSION**

*Jim Cason, Mayor*

*William H. Kerdyk Jr., Vice-Mayor*

*Rafael "Ralph" Cabrera Jr., Commissioner*

*Maria Anderson, Commissioner*

*Frank C. Quesada, Commissioner*

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*Patrick G. Salerno, City Manager*

*Craig E. Leen, City Attorney*

*Walter J. Foeman, City Clerk*

Visit the City of Coral Gables Web site:

**[www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com)**



*City of  
Coral Gables*

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## License holders

Prior to hiring a contractor, residents should always make sure that contractors are licensed and insured. The Florida Building Code recognizes licenses issued by:

- Miami Dade County Construction Trades Qualifying Board
- State of Florida

Each license holder must have a specified number of years in the field in order to qualify for the specific trade listed, must pass an examination and carry proof of insurance.

Be sure to ask for proper identification before entering into a contract. A number is issued to each individual, and it must be displayed on all advertising including the contractors' vehicle.

## Unlicensed contractors

There are many contractors who attempt to qualify as licensed contractors. These individuals usually make promises of quick and inexpensive repairs and require large up-front deposits. Be wary of the following:

- Soliciting in the neighborhood claiming to have just finished a job in the area
- Drives an unmarked car, van or truck without listing a Miami Dade County or State of Florida's license number on the vehicle
- May have receipts, stationery or other business documents that do not list a business location, telephone number or license number. Instead documents may only list a pager number or P.O. Box address
- Asks the owner, verbally or in writing, to obtain all necessary permits

## What should a resident do before signing a contract?

- Talk to your friends, neighbors or business associates to obtain referrals for good contractors.
- Verify qualifications by checking with the City of Coral Gables Building and Zoning Department at 305-460-5228, Miami Dade Code Compliance at 305-375-2901, or the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation at 1-800-341-7940.
- Obtain written estimates from at least three different companies. Be sure to include all work required such as painting, electrical, plumbing, ceiling and floor finishing in the contract. Completion dates and payment schedules must be in writing. The lowest bid may not always be the best deal.

Remember, contractors are specialists and are licensed to perform specific construction work. Examples of these trades are general contractors (building), electrical, plumbing, mechanical (air conditioning), pools, roofing, demolition, excavation, landscaping, and painting.

## A contractor has been selected. Now what?

Before allowing any work to proceed, be sure the contractor obtains all necessary permits from the Building and Zoning Department. A general contractor or subcontractor will be ordering materials for the project and may be paying other expenses for you. In order to be advised about liens by contractors or material suppliers who are not paid, you should file a

Notice of Commencement with the Miami Dade County Circuit Court prior to the performance of any work costing more than \$2,500. A recorded copy of the Notice of Commencement must be posted at the job site. If the homeowner does not file this notice, the homeowner may have to pay twice for the improvements. Familiarize yourself with the "Florida Construction Lien Law" found at [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com).

## What is the Construction Lien Law?

The Construction Lien Law (Chapter 713, Florida Statutes) is the current law, which replaces the older "Mechanics Lien Law" allows contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, or others providing construction or material services to your home or business, to place a lien against your property if invoices for services or supplies are not paid.

Residents can protect yourself by asking your contractor for a statement that all material suppliers and subcontractors have been paid. Before final payment is made, homeowners should obtain proof that all of the inspections and requirements from the City have been approved and completed, and you should require a Final Release of Lien from your contractor covering all contractors, subcontractors, laborers and suppliers.

Residents may call the Building and Zoning Department Inspection line at 305-460-5245 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, to determine the status of the inspections on your project.

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