



Repairing your home after the Alberta wildfires

How the Consumer Protection Act applies

One option to repair or renovate a home after fire or smoke damage is to hire a contractor. If the contractor enters into the contract away from their place of business and wants any payment before all work is complete, they are a prepaid contracting business.

All prepaid contractors must be licensed to conduct business in Alberta. You can check if they have a licence by using the search tool at: <https://www.servicealberta.ca/find-if-business-is-licenced.cfm>.

Prepaid contracts *must* be in writing and must conform to requirements in the [Consumer Protection Act](#).

Even if a contractor isn't requesting payment until after the work is completed, it is a good idea to have a written contract in place before work begins so that there are no surprises or misunderstandings.

Making an informed decision

In addition to verifying if a prepaid contractor is licensed, a best practice is to research and obtain quotes from three or more contractors to compare prices. Additionally, a web search of those businesses online through websites, such as the Better Business Bureau, may help to provide additional insight.

Things to look out for

Be aware of contractors who:

- grossly overcharge for their services
- quote a price without seeing your property
- don't provide a written contract
- use a post office box as their mailing address
- don't indicate start or completion dates
- demand large down payments
- offer a special price
- promise a discount if you allow them to use your home to advertise their work (the contractor has probably made the same offer to everyone).

Cancel a contract

Consumers have the right to cancel prepaid contracts within 10 days of receiving a copy of the signed contract and have extended cancellation rights if the prepaid contractor is not licensed or the contract does not conform to the requirements under the [Consumer Protection Act](#). For more information, please go to our [Hiring a Contractor page](#) on alberta.ca

File a complaint

If you feel a contractor has not followed the requirements under the *Consumer Protection Act*, or fulfilled the obligations of your contract, you can file a consumer complaint. For more information, go to our [File a consumer complaint against a business](#) page on alberta.ca.

For more information:

- The [Consumer Protection page](#) on alberta.ca has information about the Consumer Investigations Unit and the laws that protect consumers.
- The [Consumer and business tips page](#) on alberta.ca contains an online library of tipsheets on a variety of issues, including unfair practices.

For more information contact Service Alberta and Red Tape Reduction at 1-877-427-4088

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