CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD

Fast Facts

Classifications for Debris Removal After a Declared Disaster

The Contractors State License Board (CSLB) is providing guidance to property owners to ensure they hire contractors licensed in the appropriate classifications for debris removal after a disaster.

Before making a decision to remove debris from your property, check with your city or county building department to see if there are any permitting requirements or guidelines apply, and whether government-funded debris removal programs are available.

If you are hiring a contractor for debris removal, the contractor is required to have one of the following classifications:

- A – General Engineering
- B – General Building
- C-12 – Earthwork and Paving
- C-21 – Building Moving/Demolition
- C-49 – Tree and Palm
    - Please note: For C-49, this can only be for debris removal limited to tree service and removal.

Contractors with one or more of these classifications must also have passed a Contractors State License Board Hazardous Substance Removal Certification examination and comply with Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER) requirements established by the Department of Industrial Relations before providing debris removal that includes hazardous materials after a disaster.

CSLB's Disaster Help Center has additional resources for rebuilding after a disaster, including Terms of Agreement: A Consumer Guide to Home Improvement Contracts. Work performed in a declared disaster area is considered home improvement and needs to follow payment rules.

This limits down payments to $1,000 or 10 percent of the total project cost, whichever is less. Any additional payments, also known as progress payments, must also not exceed the total value of work already completed and materials that have been delivered to your home.

The Contractors State License Board, which operates under the umbrella of the California Department of Consumer Affairs, licenses and regulates California's 285,000 contractors, and is regarded as one of the leading consumer protection agencies in the United States.

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CheckTheLicenseFirst.com

CSLB strongly recommends property owners take the following steps before hiring any contractor:

- **Check the CSLB website:** Go to cslb.ca.gov and use the "Find A Licensed Contractor" tool to search for the contractor by name, city, zip code, or specific classification, or by license number. If you have the contractor's license number, you can enter www.cslb.ca.gov forward-slash license number (for example, www.cslb.ca.gov/88888888).
- **Check license status**: Verify the contractor's license number is current and active - in good standing.
- **Review complaint disclosure:** The CSLB website also allows you to check for any disclosable consumer complaints or legal actions taken against the contractor.
- **Does the contractor have employees?** Confirm workers' compensation insurance compliance.
- **Get at least three bids:** Compare quotes from different contractors to ensure you are getting a fair price.
- **Request and check references:** Ask for references from previous clients and follow up with them about their experience with the contractor.
- **Ask about recent projects:** Have they done debris removal before? Visit the contractor's previous job sites if possible.