



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

Klein Warns Bronx Residents Against Using Unlicensed Contractors

JEFFREY D. KLEIN July 8, 2010

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Helps Middletown Resident After Contractor Bails on Bathroom Remodel

State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) sent a warning to all Bronx residents this week as many prepare to hire contractors for home improvements and remodeling during the summer season. The warning - to stay away from using unlicensed contractors - comes on the heels of a nearly three month battle on behalf of a Middletown resident whose contractor left her with a half-finished bathroom.

Josephine Bailey first contacted Senator Klein's office in April of this year. After hiring a contractor to do some work in her bathroom, Bailey was extremely distressed when the contractor left the project only half finished and then refused to return her calls. The contractor had left Bailey with a toilet that needed grouting and a radiator with no cover.

Klein's office immediately contacted the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs, which determined that the contractor Bailey hired did not have a license in the Bronx, but was licensed in Rockland County.

Klein's office then contacted Rockland County's Department of Consumer Protection and connected that agency with NYC Consumer Affairs. The two departments began proceedings to fine the contractor and revoke his Rockland County license for his failure to complete the work on Bailey's bathroom.

Upon learning of the joint efforts of the consumer affairs departments of both counties, the contractor immediately called Bailey and set up a time to complete the work on her bathroom.

"Hiring an unlicensed contractor can cost you in ways you never imagined. I urge all residents to check the status of a contractor's license before hiring them to begin any home improvements or repairs. A quick phone call or internet search can save you money and a lot of hassle," said State Senator and Deputy Majority Leader Jeffrey D. Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

"I really appreciated what Senator Klein's office did for me, their help was really wonderful. They followed up and called repeatedly to let me know the status of the case," said Josephine Bailey.

For instant information on whether a home improvement contractor you're thinking of hiring is licensed - visit the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs' website at http://www.nyc.gov/html/dca/html/licenses/license_check.shtml.