

hiring contractors + design professionals

Report work by unlicensed contractors or misconduct by design professionals. Call (212) 442-2000.

Purchasing a house, co-op, condo, building or land brings responsibility, and new owners must legalize any illegal construction done by prior owners. Make sure you hire a qualified architect, engineer or contractor to perform the work.

Design Professionals

New York State issues licenses for professional engineers and registered architects. A State-licensed PE or RA must submit the required plans and work permit applications to the Department. (In limited cases, these design professionals may self-certify that their plans satisfy applicable laws and codes.) Contact local PE or RA industry organizations to find a State-licensed design professional. To report unprofessional conduct by a State-licensed PE or RA, contact the New York State Education Department's Office of the Professions at www.op.nysed.gov or call the Department of Buildings' Internal Audits and Discipline Unit at (212) 442 – 2000.

Contractors

The Department of Buildings issues more than 30 types of licenses, registrations or certifications. Use the License Search at nyc.gov/buildings to confirm the status of a license, registration or certification, and see the website's Enforcement + Violations section for information on disciplinary actions.

Other City agencies have licensing requirements. For example, the Department of Consumer Affairs requires licenses for people or businesses working in a residential building or negotiating home improvement contracts. Visit nyc.gov/consumers for specific information and to confirm the status of a DCA-issued license.

Licensing, certification and registration requirements help prevent unqualified people from putting New Yorkers at risk. For example, the Department of Buildings issues master plumber licenses to contractors qualified to perform plumbing work and master fire suppression piping contractor licenses to contractors qualified to work on sprinkler systems or standpipes. (NYC Construction Codes §28-408.1 and §28-410.1.) This is because allowing unlicensed plumbers to work on your home can be dangerous. Fumes from damaged sewer lines can make people sick, gas lines can rupture, and leaking waste pipes can threaten the water supply. Plus, only a licensed plumber should repair a gas boiler: Unlicensed boiler work can lead to a fatal buildup of carbon monoxide.

The Department will only issue permits for plumbing and fire suppression work to a licensed master plumber or licensed master fire suppression piping contractor. Only these licensees — or the employees they supervise — may work on piping systems.

All master plumbers and master fire suppression piping contractors must have a place of business in New York City other than a home office. When you hire a contractor, be sure to have a written contract. It should include the contractor's:

- Company name;
- Company address; and
- License Number(s).

Certain limited plumbing work can be done without a plumbing license. No license is required to change sinks, faucets, or toilets — but work that requires installing or removing a shut-off valve or trap must be performed by a licensed plumber.