



## CONSUMER TIPS

### *Protect Yourself from Electrical Repair Fraud*

The best strategy to protect yourself from repair fraud is to pre-qualify your licensed electrical contractor. Do this now and build a working relationship in case you need their services in an emergency.

#### **How to Pre-Qualify an Electrician:**

- Ask friends and family for recommendations.
- Make sure the electrician is licensed by the Contractors State License Board and that the contractor's license number appears in their advertisement.
- Check the contractor's license status online at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov) or via phone at (800) 321-CSLB(2752).
- If the contractor has employees, make sure they're covered by workers' compensation insurance.
- Ask if the contractor carries General Liability Insurance to cover any damage done to your property.
- Make sure the electrician who is going to do the work is certified by the California Department of Industrial Relations' Division of Apprenticeship Standards.
- Hire the company to perform a simple job or a diagnostic test of your electrical system. Get a feel for their professionalism and thoroughness. This small investment could save you a lot of money in an emergency when you're power suddenly goes out.

#### **Other Tips:**

- Make sure the technician who arrives at your home is from the company that you called.
- Watch out for high-pressure sales tactics:
  - Preying on fear of fire danger
  - Offering discounts for cash payments or if add-on work is scheduled only during that appointment
- Don't pay the technician in cash – use only personal checks from an established account or a credit card.
- Avoid companies that advertise without a physical business address.