

Report fraud

Go to ReportAContractor.Lni.wa.gov or call 1-888-811-5974, and choose option 1.

Learn how Washington state is working with labor and business to fight the underground economy in construction: www.Lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Contractors/UE.



Education & Enforcement

Working together for a fair and vital economy

Upon request, foreign language support and formats for persons with disabilities are available. Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 360-902-5797. L&I is an equal opportunity employer.

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Stop illegal contracting.

See it? Report it.



Go to:
ReportAContractor.Lni.wa.gov
1-888-811-5974, and press 1



WHY REPORT FRAUD? You pay. So should they.

Contractors who fail to register with the state and don't pay taxes or fees are committing fraud and breaking the law. Even worse, they're undercutting contractors who follow the rules.

Besides winning bids for the same projects that your company is competing for, tax cheats who pay workers and subcontractors under the table raise your costs. Here's one way that happens.

Under Washington state law, employees injured on the job are guaranteed workers' compensation benefits, even if their employers failed to pay premiums. Your business picks up the added insurance costs of those who skip out on payments.

And then there are the consumers to consider. Unregistered contractors who do shoddy work leave the people who hired them with little legal or

financial recourse. They often violate wage and employment laws. They give all contractors a bad name.

Reporting suspected fraud: The basics

- Go to ReportAContractor.Lni.wa.gov or call 1-888-811-5974, and choose option 1.
- Provide an accurate address of an active jobsite. Include landmarks and cross streets.
- Make the report as soon as possible.
- Remain anonymous, if you prefer.
- Report any L&I-related contractor violations, including contractor registration and trades licensing, construction codes, minimum wage, prevailing wage, workplace safety and workers' compensation fraud.
- See inside for more reporting tips.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Report illegal contractors

Suspect fraud? Here's how to help L&I inspectors check out your tip.

- Speed matters.** Report suspected violators as soon as you see them.
 - By telephone: Call 1-888-811-5974, and choose option 1.
 - By mobile device or desktop computer: Go to **ReportAContractor.Lni.wa.gov**.
 - Give us the complete job site address, including major cross streets, landmarks and street designations such as NW, Southeast, Lane or Drive.
- More is better.** The more details you provide, the better we can investigate your tip. Examples of helpful details:
 - License plates, signs on cars or trucks (i.e. Bob's Heating van) at the job site.
 - Property owner information.
- Look for the submit button.** When filing on the Web, make sure you click "submit" at the bottom of the online form. You will automatically receive a notification message and a referral number.
- Unpermitted work.** L&I also investigates contractors doing construction without proper permits, a practice that can pose a safety

hazard to workers and occupants.

Please report:

- Active job sites that you suspect had no permits.
- Sites where electrical work was done without an electrical permit and without a visible electrical contractor.
- Sites where plumbing was done without a visible plumbing company.

- Closing the loop.** When you submit a report online or by speaking on the phone with a fraud prevention specialist, you will receive a referral number. If you contact us later, mention the referral number to find out what happened with your tip. For status updates, call 1-888-811-5974, and choose option 1.

Remaining anonymous versus providing contact information

You aren't required to give your name or contact information when submitting a report. But if you provide contact information, we can reach you if we have questions about your tip and follow up with you. If you leave your report as a phone message with no way to contact you, it will be difficult to track the status of your tip.

Red flags that a contractor may be unregistered:

- Pays workers in cash and doesn't give them a pay stub.
- Submits bids well below the industry standard.
- Requires employees to work long hours, but reports fewer hours than they actually worked.
- Does not pay "prevailing wages" as required in public works projects.
- Promises to pay medical bills for an injured worker, rather than report an on-the-job accident to L&I.

How L&I handles suspected fraud

L&I reviews every tip of potential fraud.

Construction compliance inspectors visit construction sites and issue citations and infractions. Investigators build cases. Auditors determine how much money is owed. Revenue agents work to collect it.

Investigations can take several months, and complex cases can take even longer. Information remains confidential until the investigation ends.

Depending on the circumstances, L&I can take civil action to recover monies owed or work with prosecutors to pursue criminal charges.



Verify a Contractor, Tradesperson or Business

Maybe you want to hire a certified plumber or see if there are lawsuits against a particular contractor's bond. It's easy to find out with L&I's online tool, "Verify."

This one-stop shop gives you access to key L&I information about companies and licensed professionals. Verify whether:

- Contractors are registered with the state.
- Electricians have a current license.
- Businesses are up to date on workers' compensation premiums.
- And much more.

Use your mobile device or desktop computer to visit www.Verify.Lni.wa.gov.