



# After the Storm: Tips & Resources

## Don't become the victim of an unlicensed activity scam

**Know what services require a state license.** Visit [www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/services-requiring-a-dbr-license/](http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/services-requiring-a-dbr-license/) to see a list of DBPR-regulated businesses and professions.

**Report unlicensed activity.** To report unlicensed activity, call DBPR's Unlicensed Activity Program Hotline at 866.532.1440; email [ULA@myfloridalicense.com](mailto:ULA@myfloridalicense.com); or download the free DBPR mobile app through iTunes or the Google Play app store.



### **Verify licenses before you hire or sign a contract.**

Always verify a professional's license online at [www.myfloridalicense.com](http://www.myfloridalicense.com); by calling 850.487.1395; or by downloading the free DBPR mobile app through iTunes or the Google Play app store.

**Be wary of individuals who only produce an "occupational license," or corporate filing.** An "occupational license" only means the person has paid a tax receipt to the local municipality.

**Use your best judgement when signing a contract and making payments.** Get everything in writing, including a detailed description of the work to be completed, a completion date and the total cost. Never pay cash in full before the work is completed and be cautious of writing checks to individuals, especially when dealing with a company.

## DBPR mobile app

Verify licenses or report unlicensed activity on the go!

Download the DBPR mobile app on iTunes or get it on Google Play!

Scan the QR code to learn more!



# Generator safety tips

## Fixed, installed generators

- Hire a Florida-licensed electrician to connect the generator to your house wiring using a transfer switch. This will prevent your generator from backfeeding utility lines and possibly causing damage to your generator when utility power is restored.



## Portable, gasoline-powered generators

- Thoroughly read and follow the manufacturer's instructions to ensure the safe operation of your generator and avoid dangerous shortcuts.
- Set it up outside, away from all open windows, including neighbors' windows, to prevent deadly exhaust from entering a home or business.
- Use a heavy-duty extension cord rated for outdoor use to keep the generator safely outdoors. If the appliance has a three-prong plug, always use a three-prong extension cord.
- Consider using a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm to be alerted if carbon monoxide levels become dangerous.
- Connect appliances directly to it. Do not wire your generator directly to your breaker or fuse box.
- Turn off all connected appliances before starting your generator. Turn connected appliances on one at a time, never exceeding the generator's rated wattage.
- Don't touch a generator if you are wet or are standing in water or on damp ground.
- Never refuel a hot generator or one that is running – hot engine parts or exhaust can ignite gasoline.
- Ensure you have plenty of gas for operation stored safely in gas containers.
- Don't leave a running generator unattended; turn it off at night and when away from home.

Source: Florida Power & Light

# Storm-related services requiring Florida licensure

Below are some examples of common storm-related services that may or may not require a state license from DBPR.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive, and any additional or detailed questions should be directed to DBPR by calling 850.487.1395. Consumers should check with their local building departments to determine if there are additional permitting and/or licensing requirements for their area.

## Services that require a state license

- Roof repairs
- New or replacement roof
- Installing new windows
- Plumbing repairs
- Electrical repairs or rewiring

## Did you know?

Unlicensed contracting during a declared State of Emergency is a felony offense!

## Services that do not require a state license

- Trimming or removing a fallen tree
- Removing debris
- Placing a tarp on a roof
- Installing storm shutters





# Storm damage?

Follow these steps when making repair preparations.

**Contact your insurance agent.** Contact your insurance agent first to verify that your insurance covers the repairs before you sign a contract.

**Verify licenses before you hire or sign a contract.** Always verify a professional's license online at [www.myfloridalicense.com](http://www.myfloridalicense.com); by calling 850.487.1395; or by downloading the free DBPR Mobile app through iTunes or the Google Play app store.

**Use your best judgment when signing a contract and making payments.** Get a written estimate from several licensed contractors to compare costs. Make sure the estimate includes the work the contractor will do, the materials involved, the completion date and total cost.

Never pay cash in full before the work is completed and be cautious of writing checks to individuals, especially when dealing with a company.

## Be cautious of individuals who...

- Advertise without a license number
- Request cash only
- Use high-pressure sales tactics
- Lack a written contract
- Demand a full payment up front
- Solicit door to door

# Tips for hiring a state-licensed contractor

Licensed contractors have the appropriate education, the proper workers' compensation and/or liability insurance, and the necessary experience to complete your project.

Before hiring a contractor, ask to see their state-issued license. Also, verify the license number with DBPR and check for any complaints.

An occupational license does not qualify an individual to act as a contractor.

Being registered with the Division of Corporations as an Inc. or LLC does not qualify an individual or company to act as a contractor.

Get a written estimate from several licensed contractors. Make sure the estimate includes the work the contractor will do, the materials involved, the completion date and total cost.

Beware of contractors who claim to be the fastest or the cheapest. Hiring them could result in poor workmanship, inferior materials or unfinished jobs.

Check with your local building department for additional information about requirements for supplementary permits and licenses.



**Report suspected unlicensed activity!**

 866.532.1440

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