

Avoid Home Improvement Scams

(NAPSA)—While home repairs are a standard part of homeownership, they can open the door to scam artists seeking to prey on vulnerable older adults—but you can avoid being a target. That’s a good thing, since recent research suggests older Americans lose over \$36 billion annually to a range of financial exploitation schemes, including home improvement scams.

Scammers use a variety of strategies to target seniors, from charging inflated prices and delivering substandard work, to using high-pressure tactics to sell services. Older adults are prime tar-

HOME IMPROVEMENT SCAMS

Tools to Reduce Your Risk



Connecting You to Community Services



Keeping your home in good repair doesn't have to wreck your finances.

gets for this type of exploitation because they often own homes with equity, tend to be more trusting and may be less likely to report an incident.

Home repair scams can jeopardize the independence of older adults by robbing them of money and equity in their home, as well as threatening their safety.

Fortunately, there are solutions. A new brochure, “Home Improvement Scams—Tools for Reducing Your Risk,” has been released by the Eldercare Locator to provide detailed recommendations that seniors can use to safeguard their financial future.

The brochure provides information and resources that can help older adults avoid being targeted in the first place and guidance on what to do if you are a victim of this type of scam. It also features a handy checklist to help homeowners select a reputable contractor.

This is an essential publication for any older adult interested in undertaking a home repair project armed with information that will help to ensure it is a success. To order a copy, visit the Eldercare Locator at www.eldercare.gov.

The Eldercare Locator, a public service of the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is a nationwide service that connects older adults and their caregivers with information and referrals to local providers and programs. The toll-free number is (800) 677-1116.