

SAFETY SENSE

Don't Let Electrical Work Become A Shock

(NAPSA)—When it comes to do-it-yourself projects, people should make sure safety comes first—especially when working with electricity.

In fact, the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) cautions homeowners to think twice about doing their own electrical work. If you don't know what you're doing, consider hiring a qualified, licensed electrician.

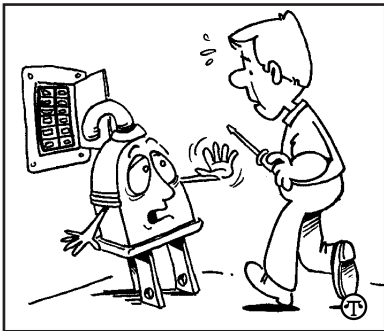
The group offers consumers these tips for choosing a qualified electrical contractor:

- Check the phone book, ask friends and family, or call the Better Business Bureau for names of contractors. Beware of door knockers—most reputable companies don't need to go door-to-door for work.

- Interview before you hire. Are the contractors certified, licensed, bonded and insured? Insurance should include property damage and workers compensation coverage. Are they members of a national or regional trade association?

- Get estimates from two or three contractors—over the phone for small jobs, in person and with an hourly rate for larger jobs.

- Find out what kind of work the contractors do. Large or small



Think It Through—Homeowners should think twice before attempting electrical repairs.

jobs? Residential or commercial?

- Will a permit be required? It should be under the contractor's name, not yours, and posted at the job site.

- Get references from other homeowners and ask about their satisfaction with the work done.

- Electricians generally do not repair holes cut or drilled in walls, trenches dug or landscaping that is disturbed in the course of the job. Know in advance what work will be left to be done after your electrical job.

For more information about home electrical safety, visit the ESFI Web site at www.electrical-safety.org or call 703-841-3229.