



A Program with the  
Colorado Attorney General  
and the AARP Foundation



Colorado Attorney General  
John W. Suthers



Better Business Bureaus®  
Serving Colorado



## Do's and Don'ts of Winterizing Your Home Heating System

This is the time of year to get your furnace cleaned and ready for winter. While most contractors are reputable, the furnace "scam artists" are on the move at this time of year. Unfortunately, unsuspecting homeowners become victims of their fraudulent and unscrupulous activities.

**These situations can be avoided by knowing how to recognize questionable and potentially fraudulent contractors.**

**Do** maintain and prolong your furnace by cleaning air returns with a household vacuum cleaner and checking the filter once a month, replacing it if necessary.

**Do** get your heating system thoroughly cleaned by a reputable, licensed, local mechanical contractor every two years.

**Do** get at least three independent written estimates from licensed local mechanical contractors if a furnace repair or replacement is recommended. If you subsequently sign a contract for work, make sure it stipulates that your final payment will be withheld pending mandatory inspection by the building department responsible for mechanical code enforcement where you live.

**Don't** fall for telephone solicitations that offer "low-cost" or "free" furnace cleaning. Once in the dwelling, the worker will tell the homeowners their heating system has serious problems that require immediate attention.

**Don't** sign a contract just because the worker says you face possible illness or death if the furnace isn't replaced immediately. If told your furnace threatens your health, ask for a written copy of the technician's test results and call your local gas company.

**Don't** ever let someone in your house who came to your door uninvited.

Recognize, Refuse, Report  
Consumer Fraud

1-800-222-4444

[www.aarpelderwatch.org](http://www.aarpelderwatch.org)