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More Contractor Facts

While the Contractors State License Board says that anyone performing construction work in California that totals \$500 or more in labor and materials must be licensed, unlicensed workers are easy to find, and for small jobs around the house, usually a good solution.

The Labor Enforcement Task Force (LETF), part of the California Department of Industrial Relations is out there to police what they call "an underground economy and improve the state's business environment" to enforce carrying workers' compensation insurance and provide a safe work environment, proper payment of wages and support the collection of all California taxes, fees and penalties. In 2012, a total of 635 construction businesses were inspected by the LETF. The California State License Board estimates there are about 300,000 licensed contractors in the state, so despite undercover sting operations, the likelihood of getting caught is fairly slim. Obviously it's hard to quantify how many unlicensed contractors there are.

C. Tyson