

April is Here! It's Time for Spring Cleaning

BBB Column

By Lauren Galley, Regional Director, Bryan/College Station Better Business Bureau

It's that time of year when spring cleaning is in full swing, but that can be a daunting task if you have a full and hectic schedule. Many people may turn to a cleaning service for extra help. This is an option that can offer some relief and provide extra space in your schedule. However, it is important to do your research first to make sure and choose a trustworthy cleaning service.

Over 630 complaints were filed against cleaning services to BBB nationwide in 2017 and that number increased to over 700 in 2018. Some complaints reported stolen or damaged items within the home. Complainants also reported the cleaning service left the job unfinished or not satisfactory and others were left with charges that were more than the original quote. There are also reports of fraudulent companies, which charged money upfront and then were never heard from again or didn't return to fix a poorly done job.

Luckily, BBB has tips for finding a trustworthy service:

- **Do your research.** Ask friends, family members and neighbors to recommend a trustworthy cleaning business or individual they use. Be sure to check out businesses through bbb.org to read customer reviews and details on complaints. You can also find a trustworthy cleaning service by using BBB search to find an accredited cleaner in your area.
- **Interview candidates.** Interview multiple candidates to determine if you would rather hire a large cleaning business or an individual cleaning person. During the interview, you should be able to meet with someone from the cleaning business, as well as with the person who will actually be cleaning your home or office.
- **Check credentials.** Any individual or business you hire should be registered, bonded (a form of insurance that protects you from any criminal or dishonest acts by the employee) and insured (protects you in case the employee causes an accident) to work in your home. Whether you hire an individual or a business, feel free to ask if the employee(s) working in your home has completed a background check.
- **Request references.** Ask that the business or individual you hire to provide you with a list of references you may contact.
- **Discuss cost.** Determine whether you will need to hire the cleaning service for a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly visit and ask about their pricing. Find out exactly what is included in their services and make sure it encompasses everything you wish to have cleaned. The business should walk through your home before giving you an estimate.
- **Get everything in writing.** When you decide on the company to hire, make sure you have a written agreement that spells out clearly what the cleaners in your home will be doing. Get any verbal commitments in writing and signed by both parties.

Visit bbb.org for more information on a cleaning service you can trust.

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