Wisconsin “Right to Cure Law”

The “Right to Cure Law” provides the steps and timetables to be followed in resolving any claims of dwelling construction defects by consumers against contractors or suppliers. Claims must be pursued through the “Right to Cure Law” process before arbitration or before legal action.

The 2005 Wisconsin Act 201, the “Right to Cure Law,” says that consumers at the time of contracting for construction or remodeling work for dwellings must be provided with this brochure describing requirements for making any future claims of construction defects.

People who feel they have a claim concerning defective workmanship or materials need to provide written notice to contractors or suppliers before any legal action may be filed. The contractors and suppliers have the opportunity and the responsibility to respond to claims.

Construction defects can involve workmanship, materials, or code requirements in new construction or remodeling, but not maintenance or repairs. Claims may be made by owners, tenants, or property associations.

This document highlights some of the provisions of the “Right to Cure Law”, and is not a complete description of the law, and is not a substitute for legal representation.

Notice Concerning Construction Defects

Wisconsin law contains important requirements you must follow before you may file a lawsuit for defective construction against the contractor who constructed your dwelling or completed your remodeling project or against a window or door supplier or manufacturer. Section 895.07 (2) and (3) of the Wisconsin statutes requires you to deliver to the contractor a written notice of any construction conditions you allege are defective before you file your lawsuit, and you must provide your contractor or window or door supplier the opportunity to make an offer to repair or remedy the alleged construction defects. You are not obligated to accept any offer made by the contractor or window or door supplier. All parties are bound by applicable warranty provisions.

More Highlights

• Claimants may accept settlement offers, accept them in part, or reject offers, doing so via detailed written notice.
• The law does not apply where there is no contract to construct, as in the case of purchasing an existing home.
• Contractors and suppliers have the right to inspect and, as appropriate, test alleged defects.
• Access must be provided in a timely fashion for inspections, tests, and repairs.
• Additional claims made or discovered after an original claim, are treated as separate in terms of time and process.
• There is a different timetable and process for the claims and responses if a contractor seeks contribution from a supplier.
• Failure by the claimant, contractor, or supplier to follow the “Right to Cure Law” can result in delay or dismissal of legal or arbitration actions.

The Department Safety and Professional Services prepared this brochure, but does not investigate, arbitrate, or judge consumer-contractor/supplier disputes. Those disputes are solved through the “Right to Cure Law” process, by the state’s court system, and, for alterations and additions, the Home Improvement Practices Code, ATCP 110, of the state Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection.

The Department Safety and Professional Services does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. Reasonable accommodation, including the provision of informational material in an alternative format, will be provided for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Contact the Industry Services Division at 608-266-2112, or TTY 800-947-3529.

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