

HOW TO PICK A CAST STONE COMPANY

All Cast Stone is Not Created Equal

Cast stone varies in quality. Manufacturing companies vary in capability and compliance with standards of practice. Checking for the below items will help ensure you are getting a good product for your money. Making it to the end of the list with good results will help ensure that you get quality product and service at a fair price.

Check off
when complying
or complete

1. Do They Have a Plant
Do they have a plant where the stone is produced? Can you tour it? Several local "Cast Stone companies" are operating in garages or very small warehouses.
2. Permits
Find out if they have permits with the TECQ. Any reputable company will have the necessary permits and these permits are public record. You can check on the internet on the TCEQ website. Google "TCEQ" or go to this link to search by company name <http://www15.tceq.texas.gov/crpub/index.cfm?fuseaction=cust.CustSearch>
3. Plant Visit
Go see where the Cast Stone is manufactured. Ask for a tour of the plant. Is it a local company? Are they professional and attentive to detail?
4. Look Around
Take a look around the plant. Is the plant large enough to handle your order? Are they well organized? Are they handling and curing the Cast Stone properly? Is it clean and contaminant free?
5. Product Test Results
Ask about their recent product test results from an independent lab. What is the compression strength? It should be higher than 6500 psi. What is the absorbability of the Cast Stone? It should be lower than 6%. Are the test results recent?
6. Insurance
Find out if they have insurance. Ask for a copy of their insurance coverage. What does their insurance cover? Will you be liable for anything they do not have covered?
7. Workman's Comp.
Call and ask if they have workman's comp. Are you liable for their lack of coverage? Are they responsible for their own workers?

8. Customer Service Policy

Talk to their manager about customer service. Do they have policies on how to handle customers? When a problem arises how long will you have to wait for replacement pieces? What are the policies? Do they treat their customers well? How well are you being treated while doing this evaluation?

9. Warrantee

Inquire about their product warrantee. Do they back up their own product? Do they guarantee their work?

10. References

Request a list of references and call them. Did they receive good service? Was there any problem with the cast stone or speed of service? How quickly was it resolved? Do their references recommend you use them?

11. Delivery Capability

Get information on how they get their product delivered. Do they have their own drivers? Do they outsource their delivery? Do their drivers know how to handle Cast Stone?

12. Finished Jobs

Go look at some of their finished jobs. Does the cast stone still look good after years in the weather? Is the cast stone of uniform color and quality?

13. Years in Business

Find out about the company's history. How long have they been in business? How long have they been manufacturing cast stone? How long have they been incorporated?

14. Years at Location

Ask how long they have been at their current manufacturing location. Have they been there long? Do they have stability you can depend on? Will they be there next year if you have any problems?

15. Mix Design

Take a look at their mix design. What percentage of concrete is in their cast stone mix? What are their ingredient ratios?

16. Additives

Look at their list of additives. What chemicals are going in to your cast stone? Are they environmentally friendly? Will you be putting potential lawsuit material on your job? Do they have MSDS for all of their ingredients?

17. Compare Prices

If all the above items are relatively equal, only then should price become the issue.