



# CONSUMER RATINGS

## *6<sup>th</sup> Step to Buying New Windows*



**“Asking to See the Warranty”...** You have evaluated your existing windows and decided to replace them. Consumer Ratings recommends taking 7 simple steps to make your purchase easier and more satisfying. This article explores the 6<sup>th</sup> Step of the process of buying replacement windows for your home or business –

### 7 Steps to New Windows

- 1) Visit a Local Showroom
- 2) Ask for References
- 3) Schedule an In-home Appointment
- 4) Ask for Energy Star Ratings
- 5) Ask for Design Pressure Ratings
- 6) **Ask to see the Warranty**
- 7) Get a Written Contract

### Step 6 Ask to see the Warranty:

In this article we explore the 6<sup>th</sup> Step of the process of buying replacement windows for your home or business – asking to see the written Warranty for the specific window being offered. Your list of potential contractors and window product choices is shorter because you have taken the first 5 steps to buying new windows and have:

1. Visited showrooms and selected only contractors you feel comfortable having work on your home
2. Asked for, received and checked local references
3. Scheduled In-Home appointments with your short list of replacement window specialists
4. Received Energy Star Ratings to Compare Pricing based upon energy savings potential
5. Received DP Ratings to Compare Pricing based upon resistance to air infiltration, water penetration, resistance to forced entry and overall structural strength

Now, it is time to narrow your window product choices further by learning which window will provide you with the best warranty coverage...

Your Replacement Window Warranty should be included - in writing - as part of the contract you receive for your window replacement project.

The warranty should clearly and specifically state who is responsible for the cost of repairs when something breaks or fails while you own your property and if there is a transferability clause allowing you to pass along a warranty when you sell your property.

Ask to see the manufacturer's written warranty for the specific product you are considering and get an explanation of that warranty for a realistic understanding of what coverage the manufacturer will provide and which portion the installation company will provide.

Here are some other points about the written warranty to consider:

- Beware of the vague "Lifetime Warranty".
- A pro-rated parts-only "Lifetime Warranty" may not cover the cost of warranty service labor and only a small percentage of the cost of parts after a very short time.
- A misleading "Lifetime Warranty" can increase window maintenance costs and make a low priced window very expensive over time.
- Warranty Transferability is also important and so is coverage for glass failure and accidental glass breakage.

**Consumer Tip:**

- **Read Consumer Ratings "How Long is a Lifetime Warranty?"**
- **Learn more about the "Creditable Lifetime Warranty".**