LAURISTON LEWIS ASSOCIATES
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

RED FLAG CHECKLISTS



Building for Your Members?

Check These Warning Signs Before the Questions Start.

A checklist for church, credit union and NGO building committees

MONEY:

Can you show where every dollar went?

- [ ] The contractor was chosen without comparable written prices or checks on similar past work
- [ ] You can't say how much has been spent, how much is committed, and how much contingency is left
- [ ] Payments are front-loaded, or fulfiled without evidence the work is complete and checked
- [ ] Contractors or sub-contractors report late payment, or work is slowing because of it
- [ ] Changes to work or materials are agreed verbally or on site, without written approval and a cost

If **you checked any box:** before the next payment, ask for a one-page cost report showing approved budget, paid to date, committed, and remaining. Paying ahead of verified progress can leave the committee with too little money to finish the work.

COMMUNICATION:

Who is deciding what, and does everyone know?

- [ ] Decisions are made on site or by phone and not written down
- [ ] More than one person is giving instructions to the contractor
- [ ] There is no written description of the works so members describe the project differently
- [ ] Trades are waiting on each other, arriving out of order, or redoing work
- [ ] Members ask about progress or cost, and get different answers

If you checked any box: agree who instructs the contractor, where decisions are recorded, and how members get one regular update. Gaps in information tend to get filled by rumour.

TIME:

Is the programme realistic, or just hopeful?

- [ ] The completion date was fixed before the scope and programme were checked
- [ ] There is no written programme, or it hasn't been updated since work began
- [ ] Approvals and permits haven't been checked, and their time and cost are not in the programme
- [ ] Delays are explained verbally e.g. “two more weeks”, with no revised date or reason in writing
- [ ] Work is covered up e.g. ‘concrete poured’ or ‘ceilings closed’ before it has been inspected

If you checked any box: ask for a written programme with a reason for each change. Agree on what must be inspected before work is covered up and keep the original dates alongside any agreed changes.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Most member-owned organisations commission a major building only occasionally, without an in-house project team to oversee it. Problems on these projects rarely arrive suddenly. They show first as unclear costs, unrecorded decisions and slipping dates. Catching them while they are small protects the budget and the committee's ability to explain every decision to its members.

Request a Project Consultation

Not sure where your project stands?
Talk to us about project and construction management. Our *Half & Half* service gives you an expert who protects your budget, decision trail, and on-site construction oversight, all in one engagement.

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This checklist is a general awareness guide and is not a substitute for professional project or construction management advice specific to your project.