OTTAWA DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS

Hiring & Quotes

Choosing a demolition contractor, comparing quotes and what to check before you sign.

4 Expert Answers from Demolition IQ

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Table of Contents

1. Do demolition contractors need a licence in Ontario?
2. What should I check before hiring a demolition company in Ottawa?
3. Does a whole-house demolition in Ottawa count as home renovation work for WSIB?
4. How many demolition quotes should I get for an Orleans teardown?

Q1

Do demolition contractors need a licence in Ontario?

We found no demolition-contractor licence in Ontario's compulsory trades material or in the City of Ottawa's list of businesses that require a municipal licence.

So the practical questions are about coverage and paperwork.

What to ask instead of "are you licensed?"

Ask the contractor for a WSIB clearance certificate. WSIB says people who own or run a business in construction, with or without employees, must register and carry coverage, with some exceptions. We did not find whether a whole-house demolition qualifies as home renovation work for the purposes of those exceptions, so a clearance certificate is the document to request rather than relying on the contractor's word about their status.

Ask for proof of liability insurance as well. We found no legal requirement for a demolition contractor to carry it, but it is the question to put in writing before any work starts.

Two other things worth confirming: who will apply for the City of Ottawa demolition permit (the Building By-law allows a contractor to apply as the owner's authorized agent), and who will arrange each utility sign-off, which has to be in hand before the permit is issued.

On the contract itself, the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 says that if you negotiate an agreement at your home rather than at the contractor's place of business, and the value is over $50, the agreement must be in writing and delivered to you. You then have until 10 days after receiving that written copy to cancel without giving a reason.

Ask the contractor to show you their WSIB clearance certificate and proof of liability insurance before you agree to anything.

Q2

What should I check before hiring a demolition company in Ottawa?

Four things to sort out before you sign anything with a demolition contractor in Ottawa.

What the contractor is responsible for

Ask for proof of liability insurance and a WSIB clearance certificate. Ontario has no demolition-contractor licence we could find, so those two documents are the practical stand-ins. WSIB says people who own or run a business in

construction must have coverage, with some exceptions.

Ask who applies for the City's demolition permit. The Building By-law allows a contractor to apply as your authorized agent, but confirm it in writing so the responsibility is clear. Ask the same about the utility sign-offs: each utility connected to the property signs off before the permit is issued, and Enbridge Gas requires 44 days from time of payment to disconnect natural gas service, so whoever is coordinating that needs to start early.

The City's demolition page says that section 30 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act requires a project owner to identify designated substances on the project and provide a list to prospective contractors before entering into a binding contract. O. Reg. 490/09 lists eleven designated substances, including asbestos, lead, mercury and silica. Health Canada advises hiring a professional to test for asbestos before demolition, and if asbestos is found, hiring a qualified asbestos removal specialist. Ask the contractor how they handle the designated substances list and whether an abatement contractor is involved before demolition begins.

Get an itemized written quote that spells out what comes down, where the work stops (this site covers demolition down to grade; anything below grade is excavation work), where the debris goes, and whether hauling is included in the price. Ask whether the permit fee, utility disconnection fees and the site fence are included or billed separately. The Consumer Protection Act, 2002 says that if your agreement includes an estimate, the contractor cannot charge more than 10 per cent above that estimate.

If you are negotiating or signing at your home rather than at the contractor's place of business, the agreement is a direct agreement under the Consumer Protection Act, 2002 and must be in writing. You have the right to cancel without reason from the day the agreement is made until 10 days after you receive the written copy.

Before you commit, ask each contractor to name, in writing, everything their price leaves out.

Q3

Does a whole-house demolition in Ottawa count as home renovation work for WSIB?

We did not find a WSIB statement that answers this for whole-house demolition, and the exemption that applies to some construction work is narrow.

Here is what WSIB says. People who own or run a business in construction, with or without employees, must register and carry coverage. There is an exemption for independent operators, sole proprietors, some partners and some executive officers, but only when they are doing exempt home renovation work on an existing private residence occupied by the person who hired them. WSIB also states that the exemption does not apply to

subcontractors. Whether a whole-house demolition counts as home renovation work on an existing private residence is a question we did not find WSIB answering directly.

What this means for you as the homeowner is straightforward: ask every contractor for a WSIB clearance certificate before work starts, and confirm it is current. WSIB's policy says a principal who directly retains a contractor to perform construction work must obtain a clearance certificate, and it excepts homeowners hiring only for exempt home renovation work; since we did not find whether a demolition counts as that work, ask for the certificate. For a house at least four metres high with a floor area of at least thirty square metres, O. Reg. 213/91 also has the contractor, as constructor, file a Notice of Project with the province, which is another thing to ask them about. Ontario has no demolition-contractor licence we could find, so the clearance certificate and proof of liability insurance are the two documents worth asking for in writing before you sign anything.

A few things to confirm in writing before the contract is signed: which structures are included in the price, exactly where the work stops (this site's scope ends at grade; anything below grade is excavation work), who applies for the permit, and where the debris goes and whether hauling is included in the quoted price.

Q4

How many demolition quotes should I get for an Orleans teardown?

We found no rule on how many demolition quotes to get; what matters is that every quote you collect prices the same job.

The more useful question is what each quote actually covers. Published prices seen October 2026 (Ontario, GTA and Canadian sources; we found no Ottawa-specific published price) put a whole-house teardown down to grade at roughly $15,000 to $40,000, or about $5 to $10 per square foot. Whether a number sits inside that range matters less than whether the quotes are comparing the same job. One contractor may include debris hauling; another may price it separately. One may include the permit application; another may leave that to you.

When you receive each quote, check that it states:

- exactly what comes down and where the work stops (at grade, not below it)
- whether debris hauling is included and where the material goes
- who arranges each utility disconnection
- who applies for the demolition permit
- how the designated substances list is handled before any contract is signed
- the payment schedule in writing

The Consumer Protection Act, 2002 says that if a consumer agreement includes an estimate, the supplier cannot charge more than 10 per cent above that estimate.
Quotes that leave hauling, permit fees or utility coordination as line items to be confirmed later make comparison harder. Ask each contractor to put every cost in writing before you decide.

The single most useful thing to confirm before choosing: ask each contractor to show you, in the written quote, exactly where the price stops and what you would be billed separately if anything changes on site.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Demolition Contractors. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before any demolition. The City requires a permit to demolish a building or structure, and every utility connected to the property signs off before the permit is issued. Information is current as of November 22, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawademolitioncontractors.ca** for the latest answers.