

INTERMEDIATE · LESSON 1 · 7 MIN READ

Lien Rights

Establishing, preserving, and protecting your lien rights from the first day of work.

OVERVIEW

Lien rights are usually created at the start of a project, not at the end. You either have them or you don't by the time payment is late.

Preserving rights is a documentation discipline — not a legal flourish.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Establishing rights through proper contract formation
- Maintaining rights through notice compliance
- Protecting rights through careful change-order management
- Recovering rights after a missed step (rarely possible)

COMMON MISTAKES

- Verbal change orders that destroy the audit trail.
- Letting the prime contractor's payment status obscure the sub's own deadlines.

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

NOTICE AS INSURANCE

A supplier sends preliminary notice on every project as standard practice — including projects that are likely to pay. The few that go bad still have full lien rights.