



FEMA

April 11 2016

FS013

News Desk: 225-382-1599

Fact Sheet

Louisiana Flood Survivors: Beware of Scams When Repairing or Rebuilding

It's a positive sign when Louisiana flood survivors begin repairing and rebuilding their homes. Unfortunately, in the past survivors have been prey to scams.

Disaster survivors are encouraged to protect themselves, their families and their finances by remaining alert for these unscrupulous acts.

- Ensure that you are hiring a licensed contractor. Contractors must be licensed to perform work in Louisiana. Search their information online at the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors at www.LSLBC.louisiana.gov/contractor-search.
- Get at least three bids for the project prior to selecting a contractor.
- Ask for a written contract before work begins.
- Agree upon estimated dates of start and completion of the project.
- Agree on the total dollar amount to be paid upon completion of work.
- Never make more than a 10 percent down payment.
- Require proof of liability and workers compensation insurance.
- Only pay invoices for actual work completed.
- Call the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors at **800-256-1392** or local law enforcement to report any suspicions of contractor scams.

Survivors should also be on the lookout for other scams:

- Phony state or federal housing inspectors.
 - Always ask to see photo identification. All state and federal officials carry badges with photo identification.

- Bogus pleas for disaster donations.
- Asking for money to apply for or receive state or federal disaster assistance.
 - Survivors are never charged to apply for or receive state or federal disaster assistance.
- Report any suspicions of scams by calling the FEMA fraud helpline at **866-720-5721** or contacting law enforcement immediately.

###