

Beware of Fraudulent Contractors

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FEMA and the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NMDHSEM) caution disaster survivors to be aware of post-disaster fraud and scams. Attempts to scam residents can be made over the phone, by mail or email, through the internet or in person. It is important to remain alert, as con artists are creative and resourceful. If an offer sounds too good to be true, it should be questioned.

Be Alert to Potential Scams

Fake or unlicensed contractors may try to take advantage of the situation to scam residents affected by the wildfires. As insurance settlements, grants and loans put homeowners in a position to pay for work on their homes, residents need to be sure the people they hire are authorized to do the work, will complete it and will do a good job.

Out-of-town scam artists may be the first to arrive at your front door after a disaster. Do your research. To find out if a potential contractor is licensed to work in New Mexico, contact the New Mexico State Licensing Board for Contractors at rld.nm.gov/about-us/public-information-hub/online-services/ or call them at (505) 476-4500 or use. FEMA does not license or certify contractors.

Be Aware of These Contractor Scams and Warning Signs

- Door-To -Door Solicitations
- High Pressure Sales or Scare Tactics
- Demand for Cash, Unusually Large Down Payments or Advanced Full Payment
- Special Deals or Extremely Low Bids
- Verbal Agreements, No Written Contract
- Out of State, No Permanent Place of Business, No Insurance
- Inadequate References



Being aware of these important clues can save you from substantial financial and emotional loss. Report suspicious activity of this kind to your local police department, the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-223-0814, or the Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Section in New Mexico:

nmag.gov/consumer-protection-1.aspx or submit a complaint by visiting the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General's (nmag.gov) page: secure.nmag.gov/ecs. You can also report the suspected fraud to the Better Business Bureau at (505) 346-0110 or visit bbb.org/local-bbb/bbb-serving-new-mexico-and-southwest-colorado.

To address many of the common myths and rumors during the New Mexico wildfires, FEMA activated a rumor/myth webpage. You can access it online at fema.gov/disaster/4652/faq-rumor.

