

Beware of Fraud

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When natural disasters occur, it is common to find people who want to take advantage of survivors by posing as official disaster aid workers or as relatives trying to help survivors complete their applications.

- Disaster survivors should be aware that con artists and criminals may try to obtain money or steal personal information through fraud or identity theft after a disaster.
- FEMA advises survivors to avoid sharing personal or financial information online or follow links that promise offers for FEMA disaster assistance.
- FEMA encourages survivors to be aware of fraud and scams and report any suspicious activity or potential fraud to **1-866-720-5721**.
- It is important to know that FEMA does not endorse any commercial businesses, products or services.

Housing inspectors claiming to represent FEMA

- Be cautious if you are asked for your nine-digit registration number. A FEMA inspector will never ask for this information. They already have it in their records.
- Don't give anyone your banking information. FEMA inspectors never require banking or other personal information such as a Social Security number.
- Ask the person to show you their identification badge. Federal employees always wear an official government badge to identify themselves.

Fake offers of local or federal aid

- Don't trust anyone who asks for money. Federal and local disaster workers do not solicit or accept money. FEMA and U.S. Small Business Administration staff never charge applicants for disaster assistance, inspections or help in filling out applications.



- Don't believe anyone who promises a disaster grant and asks for large cash deposits or advance payments in full.

Fraudulent building contractors

- Use registered local contractors backed by reliable references.
- If the work requires a skilled tradesperson (such as an electrician or plumber) make sure to verify they are properly licensed.
- To find registered contractors and licensed tradespeople check the [State of Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection's eLicense database](#).
- A written [contract is required by law. Be sure it contains all of the required information](#). Don't pay more than half the costs of repairs in advance.

If you suspect fraud, call the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at **1-866-720-5721**.



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