

Beware of Fraud and Scam Artists

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West Virginia residents should be aware that con artists and criminals may try to obtain money or steal personal information through fraud, scams, or identity theft. In some cases, thieves try to apply with FEMA using names, addresses and Social Security numbers they have stolen from residents affected by a disaster.

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance

- Federal and local disaster workers do not solicit or accept money. Don't trust anyone who offers help and then asks for money.
- Do not disclose information to any unsolicited telephone calls and e-mails from individuals claiming to be FEMA or federal employees. FEMA will not contact you unless you have called FEMA first or applied for assistance.
- FEMA representatives will ask for social security and bank account numbers when you apply and may ask for it again after you apply. Be cautious when giving this information to others who ask for it. Scam artists may pose as government officials, aid workers, or insurance company employees.
- Ask to see ID badges. All FEMA representatives carry an identification badge with a photograph. **A FEMA shirt or jacket is not proof of identity.**

Phony property inspections:

- Be on alert if somebody asks for your nine-digit registration number. **FEMA inspectors will never ask for this information.** They already have it in their records.
- No government disaster assistance official will call you to ask for your financial account information. If you doubt a FEMA representative is legitimate, feel free to call the FEMA Helpline and ask if FEMA is trying to reach you. Call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362.
- **FEMA-contracted inspectors assessing damage never charge a fee to inspect your property.**



Phony building contractors:

- FEMA does not hire or endorse specific contractors to fix homes or recommend repairs. A FEMA inspector's job is to verify damage.
- Always hire a reputable engineer, architect or building official to assess your home. An unethical contractor may create damage to get work.

To report scams, fraud, and identity-theft contact:

- FEMA's toll-free Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721
- The Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud:
justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form
- When in doubt, report any suspicious behavior to your local authorities.

For more information on West Virginia's disaster recovery, visit emd.wv.gov, [West Virginia Emergency Management Division Facebook page](#), www.fema.gov/disaster/4756 and www.facebook.com/FEMA.



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