

# FEMA Calls May Come from Unknown Phone Numbers

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Residents of Lincoln, Otero, Rio Arriba and San Juan counties and the Mescalero Apache Reservation, who applied for FEMA disaster assistance following the South Fork and Salt fires and flooding in New Mexico, should be aware that FEMA may call from unfamiliar area codes and phone numbers or show no caller ID.

It is important to answer the call. FEMA representatives are reaching out to citizens that have applied for disaster assistance. Representatives may call for a variety of reasons such as issues with applications (missing documents, insurance settlement paperwork, etc.), follow-up on access and functional needs and/or to schedule inspections at the address where the damage was reported. Inspections are required to determine whether a home is safe, sanitary, functional and accessible. If an inspection cannot be scheduled, that may cause a delay in FEMA's review of the application.

## Take steps to avoid scams

If any of the following applies, call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 to verify the identity of the caller, stop the processing of an application made in your name without your knowledge, or apply for FEMA assistance if you live within a declared county.

Always be alert to these *illegitimate* practices:

- A FEMA inspector calls and you did not submit a FEMA application.
- A FEMA inspector asks for your banking information. (FEMA inspectors are never authorized to collect your personal financial information.)
- A payment is requested from someone who says they are from FEMA. (FEMA will never request payment.)



If any of these things happen to you — or if you receive a call from someone saying they are a FEMA representative, but you aren't sure - call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 to report the incident.

If you believe you are the victim of a scam related to the fires and floods, you should file a complaint with the New Mexico Department of Justice. Visit [Fire Recovery - New Mexico Department of Justice \(nmdoj.gov\)](https://www.nmdoj.gov)

If you have knowledge of fraud, waste or abuse, you can report these tips – 24 hours a day, seven days a week – to the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721. You can also email [StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov) to report a tip.

