

Be Alert to Fraud After the Jan. 21-23, 2024, San Diego County Severe Storm and Flooding

Release Date: April 10, 2024

San Diego, Calif. — Fraudulent activity typically increases after a disaster. Con artists may try to get money from survivors or ask for personal information to try and steal their identity.

In some cases, thieves try to apply for FEMA assistance using names, addresses and Social Security numbers they have stolen from survivors. In other instances, imposters may pretend to be officials of FEMA or other government agencies.

FEMA personnel carry official identification badges with photos. FEMA staff never charge applicants for disaster assistance, inspections or help to fill out applications. Survivors can report fraud by email to StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov or call 866-223-0814.

If a FEMA inspector comes to a survivor's home and the survivor did not submit a FEMA application, the survivor's information may have been used without their knowledge. If so, survivors need to inform the inspector that they did not apply for FEMA assistance so the inspector can submit a request to stop further processing of that application.

If a survivor did not apply for assistance but they receive a letter from FEMA, they should call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. The helpline will submit a request to stop any further processing of that application.

If survivors wish to apply for FEMA assistance after stopping a fraudulent application made in their name, the Helpline will assist survivors to create a new application.

Scams



- Survivors should not believe anyone who promises a disaster grant in return for payment.
- They should be wary of unexpected phone calls or visits to their home from people claiming to be FEMA housing inspectors or people claiming they work for FEMA. FEMA representatives will have survivors' nine-digit FEMA application numbers to verify credibility and have official identification badges with photos.
- Survivors should not share banking information with a person claiming to be a FEMA housing inspector. FEMA inspectors are never authorized to collect personal financial information.
- If a survivor thinks they may be the victim of a scam or price gouging, they should report it immediately to the local police or sheriff's department or contact the [California Department of Financial Protection and Innovation](https://www.dfp.ca.gov/) at 866-275-2677 or 916-327-7585 or email ASK.DFPI@dfpi.ca.gov.
- If you suspect identity theft, visit [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.IdentityTheft.gov).

For the latest FEMA information on the Jan. 21-23, 2024, San Diego County severe storm and flooding, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4758.

###

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency, or economic status. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, you can call the Civil Rights Resource line at 833-285-7448 (TTY 800-462-7585). Those who use a relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should update FEMA with their specific number assigned to that service. Multilingual operators are available (press 2 for Spanish).



FEMA

Page 2 of 2