

Be Aware of Post-Disaster Fraud, Scams

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FEMA and the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NMDHSEM) caution residents 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.

Residents of southern New Mexico affected by the South Fork and Salt Fires and flooding 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. In some cases, thieves may try to steal your name, address, Social Security number and banking information, and try to get FEMA assistance for themselves, using your information.

- If a FEMA inspector comes to your home and you did not submit a FEMA application, your information may have been used without your knowledge to create a FEMA application. If so, please inform the inspector that you did not apply for FEMA assistance so they can submit a request to stop further processing of the application.
- If you did not apply for assistance, but receive a letter from FEMA, call the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362**. The helpline will submit a request to stop any further processing of that application.
 - If you do wish to apply for FEMA assistance after stopping an application made in your name without your knowledge, the helpline will assist you in creating a new application.

Scams

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) crews, housing inspectors and other officials are working in areas impacted by the fires and flood. They carry official identification badges with photo IDs. FEMA employees will also have access to your FEMA application number. FEMA and U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) representatives never charge applicants for disaster assistance, inspections



FEMA

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or help in filling out applications.

- Don't believe anyone who promises a disaster grant in return for payment.
- Don't give your banking information to a person claiming to be a FEMA housing inspector. FEMA inspectors are never authorized to collect your personal financial information.

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 to report a tip.

Building Contractor Fraud

FEMA does not license or certify contractors. FEMA does recommend using a local contractor, someone who is known in the community. For more information on how to protect yourself from contractor fraud and how to report it to the authorities, visit [Beware of Contractor Fraud: Go Local, Do Your Research | FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

