

Michigan Survivors: Be Alert for Fraud and Scams

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LANSING, Mich. – Disasters often bring out criminals looking to prey on survivors who appear to be easy targets for their scams, even months after a disaster has occurred.

Survivors of the Aug. 24-26, 2023, severe storms, tornadoes and flooding should continue to be aware that fraud and scams can occur anytime. FEMA encourages survivors to be alert and report any suspicious activity or potential fraud by scam artists, identity thieves and other criminals.

If you suspect fraud, waste, abuse or mismanagement involving disaster relief, call the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721, email StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov or write to: FEMA Fraud and Internal Investigation Division, 400 C Street SW Mail Stop 3005, Washington, DC 20472-3005.

Scam artists may pose as government officials, aid workers, charitable organizations, or insurance employees. You should never trust anyone who claims to be a disaster assistance employee and asks for money. Local and federal disaster assistance workers do not ask for or accept money.

All FEMA representatives wear a photo ID badge. Ask to see the badge to verify the identity of the person wearing it. A FEMA shirt is not absolute proof of identity.

If you have questions about whether someone is representing FEMA, call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362 between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. Multilingual operators are available. If you use a relay service, captioned telephone service or



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others, give FEMA your number for that service when you call.

FEMA home inspectors are still working in the affected counties to assist with recovery efforts. FEMA inspectors will already have your nine-digit registration number, and will never ask for money, banking information or your Social Security number.

If an inspector comes to your home and you did not submit a FEMA application, your information may have been used to apply without your knowledge. If so, inform the inspector that you did not apply, and they will submit a request to stop further processing of the application.

FEMA recommends you monitor your credit report for any accounts or charges you do not recognize. If you discover someone is using your information, you will need to take additional steps, including filing a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission through its website: [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov).

When you rebuild, always use licensed and bonded contractors. Ask for credentials before you hire, and never pay for work in advance. FEMA does not have “approved” contractors. Beware of contractors who say they’re affiliated with FEMA: FEMA does not endorse any business, product or service. Don’t sign anything you don’t understand, or contracts with blank spaces.

To watch an accessible video about disaster fraud, visit [FEMA Accessible: Beware Scam Artists \(Open Captioned\) - YouTube](#).

For more information about the disaster recovery operation in Michigan, visit www.fema.gov/disaster/4757.

