



Tips for Avoiding Fraud in the Wake of Disaster

Attorney General E. Scott Pruitt

Price Gouging

In counties where the Governor or the President has declared a state of emergency:

- During the declaration of emergency and **for 30 days** thereafter, price increases of **10% or more** on most goods and services are prohibited.
- During the declaration of emergency and **for 180 days** thereafter, price increases of **10% or more** on dwelling units, storage space and goods related to home repair or restoration are prohibited.
- Common complaints:
 - Food and Water
 - Hotel Rooms and Apartments
 - Rental Cars
 - Building Materials

Home Repair Fraud

- Ask for referrals from people you trust.
- Use local contractors.
- Obtain written estimates and references.
- Check out contractors with the Public Protection Unit or Better Business Bureau.
- Make sure roofers are registered with the Construction Industries Board (405-521-6550 / www.ok.gov/cib/).
- Insist on a written agreement that includes all relevant details for the project.
- Be wary of contractors who:
 - Solicit door-to-door
 - Require substantial up-front payment or request payment in cash
 - Use high pressure or aggressive sales tactics
 - Resist the use of a written contract

Charity Fraud

- Donate only to charities that you know and trust.
- Be wary of charities that seem to have been formed specifically in response to a particular disaster.
- Contact the Secretary of State to find out if the charity is registered in Oklahoma (405-521-3912 / www.sos.ok.gov/charity/).
- Ask for written information regarding the solicitor's charity.
- Listen carefully to the name of the charity. Scam artists often claim to be associated with a charity that mimics the name of a well-known organization.
- Be wary of solicitors that use high pressure or aggressive tactics, ask for donations in cash or promise prizes.

Identity Theft

If you have lost documents or other materials containing personal or financial information:

- Contact your financial institutions as soon as possible.
- Contact credit bureaus:
 - Transunion – 1-800-680-7289
 - Experian – 1-888-397-3742
 - Equifax – 1-800-525-6285
- Report lost driver's license to the Dept. of Public Safety – 405-425-2477.
- Report lost social security card to the Social Security Admin. – 1-800-269-0271.
- If you suspect that someone has stolen your identity, contact local law enforcement *immediately* and retain the police report for your records.

***For more information or to report a complaint, please contact the Attorney General's Public Protection Unit:
405-521-2029 / public.protection@oag.ok.gov / www.oag.ok.gov***