



DenverDA

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Special Edition--Fraud Advisory

Charitable Giving Guidelines & Scam Watch

As the waters recede from the tragic floods, the opportunities for scams are on the rise. Many good-hearted Coloradans become victims of these scams. I support and congratulate all who are looking for ways to help. Here is some guidance to ensure the funds to which you contribute are legal and will be used to help the flood victims.

Determining where and how to give is the first step in giving. A list of reputable agencies is available via 'Help Colorado Now' www.helpcoloradonow.org. The organization is a partnership between the Colorado Division of Homeland Security, Emergency Management (DHSEM) and Colorado Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (COVOAD) the site provides a list of reputable agencies responding to current disasters in Colorado.

Giving Guidelines

- Verify the Charity - Utilize internet resources, such as the Better Business Bureau, www.bbb.org and Charity Navigator, www.charitynavigator.org to verify the organization.
- Do not respond to unsolicited incoming emails, and never click on links contained within those messages. Also, be cautious of emails or networking sites that claim to show pictures of the disaster areas in attached files. These files may contain viruses.
- Never give your personal or financial information to anyone who solicits contributions.

Contractor Scams

Unfortunately, contractors and home-improvement scam artists thrive during these times. Posing as: Inspectors; Contractors; Utility Company representatives; FEMA Agents; Home Repair Handymen and Home Inspectors, these brazen offenders come door-to-door, post ads on Craig's list and often have seemingly legitimate credentials.

Always check their ID before you let anyone into your home. Better yet, let NO ONE offering services in your home. If you are interested in the service offered have them leave their information at the door. Only after they have left your property should you get the flyer or information they have left. Even if the person looks "official", be vigilant and wary. Follow these tips:

- Never select a home-improvement contractor who solicits door-to-door.
- Contact your insurance company directly. Ask your insurance company for a list of qualified contractors, then check the companies' ratings with the Better Business Bureau www.bbb.org
- Check to see that the contractor is licensed to do business in your municipality. In the City and County of Denver, contractors must be licensed. You can check the status of a contractor by going to the city website at www.denverda.org and clicking on "Contractor License".

If you believe you have been taken in a scam, call the



@DenverScamAlert

Denver DA Fraud Line at 720-913-9179

