



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Department of Emergency Preparedness

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 22, 2018

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How to Avoid Post-Flood Recovery Scams

FREDERICK, MD – The Frederick County Emergency Management Division cautions residents about possible scams that may occur during clean-up after recent floods.

People may stop by or call to offer services to assess or repair damage, posing as government officials with promises of disaster funds or soliciting donations for charity. In any of these cases, do not give money or personal information unless it is clear the person is a legitimate service provider.

A common scam after a disaster is the promise of disaster grants. There is currently no government money available. If assistance does become available, information will be well advertised in local media, on the county's social media accounts and on the flood recovery webpage, www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Recovery.

Any government official who comes to a door will carry proper identification. Government officials will never ask for money to provide assistance. They will never call and ask for personal information such as Social Security numbers or bank account or credit card numbers in order to provide assistance.

While there are many outstanding charitable organizations in Frederick County, fake charities prey on people's desire to help those affected in their community. Before making any donations, always verify that the charity is legitimate. The State of Maryland maintains a registry of charitable organizations that are authorized to solicit donations. Always ask for the requestor's name as well as the charity's exact name, street address, phone number and website address. Then call the charity directly to confirm the person asking for funds is an employee or volunteer. The searchable database can be found online at <http://sos.maryland.gov/Charity/Pages/SearchCharity.aspx>.

Be cautious of any contractor who shows up offering services. After natural disasters, salespeople flock to some neighborhoods offering clean up and repair services. While many of these people are honest and reputable, some are not. For those homeowners or businesses that are insured, call the insurance adjuster and have them make an estimate of the damage and probable repair cost. This will give an estimate, prepared by a professional, to help when negotiating with contractors. Be especially suspicious of salespeople who make "low-ball" estimates, require more than 50 percent payment upfront, refuse to leave a contract overnight to allow time to review it, or try to sell their services by playing on emotions. The State of Maryland Department of Labor and Licensing provides an online searchable registry of state licensed contractors at www.dllr.state.md.us/pq/.

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If any resident or business believes it has have been a victim of a scam, contact a local law enforcement agency.

The Emergency Management Division recently released post-storm [assessment surveys to help residents and businesses](#) recovering from recent heavy rain and flooding that impacted the area over the last week. The surveys are due by June 15.

The damage survey for businesses and commercial properties may be found at <https://bit.ly/2k93OzG> and for homes and residential properties at <https://bit.ly/2rUcQnC>.

All of the links provided can be found at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Recovery.

For more information, contact Emergency Management at 301-600-1746 or via e-mail at EM@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

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