

# Be Alert to Fraud After a Disaster

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Survivors 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 try to apply for FEMA assistance using names, addresses and Social Security numbers they have stolen from survivors.

- 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.
  - FEMA inspectors should not show up at your home without an appointment, but if it happens, make sure to ask for valid ID. All FEMA inspectors will have your registration number.
- If you did not apply for assistance, but receive a letter from FEMA, please 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.

## How to Protect Yourself from Fraud

- FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance teams, housing inspectors and other officials are working in areas impacted by the storms. They carry official identification badges with photo IDs. FEMA and U.S. Small Business Administration representatives never charge applicants for disaster assistance, inspections or help in filling out applications. If you suspect fraud, make sure to check their identification.
- Don't believe anyone who promises a disaster grant in return for payment.
- Be wary of unexpected phone calls or visits to your home from people claiming to be FEMA housing inspectors or people claiming they work for FEMA. FEMA representatives will have a photo-ID badge and your FEMA application number.
- 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.

## What to Do If You Suspect Fraud

- If you believe you are the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your local police or sheriff's department. Or contact the California Attorney General's Office [here](#).



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- If you suspect fraudulent activity involving FEMA, you can report it to FEMA Investigations and Inspections Division at 866-223-0814 or email [StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov).
- If you suspect identity theft, please visit [Identity Theft | FTC Consumer Information](#) or [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov).

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*FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.*