



FEMA

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State News Desk: 205-280-2312

FEMA News Desk: 770-220-5292 | FEMA-R4-NewsDesk@fema.dhs.gov

News Release

Be Alert to Fraud After a Disaster

ATLANTA – Disaster 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. If so, please inform the inspector that you did not apply for FEMA assistance so they can submit a request to stop further processing of the application.

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.

Scams

FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance teams, housing inspectors and other officials will be working in areas impacted by the Jan. 12 severe storms and tornadoes. 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.**

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 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.

If you believe you are the victim of a scam, report it immediately to your local police or sheriff's department or contact the Alabama Office of the Attorney General by calling 800-392-5658. To file a fraud complaint, go online to [Attorney General's Office - State of Alabama \(alabamaag.gov\)](http://alabamaag.gov).

If you suspect fraudulent activity involving FEMA, you can report it to the FEMA Fraud Branch at: StopFEMAFraud@fema.dhs.gov, fax: (202) 212-4926 or write to: FEMA Fraud and Internal Investigation Division, 400 C Street SW Mail Stop 3005, Washington, DC 20472-3005.

If you suspect identity theft, please visit [Identity Theft | FTC Consumer Information](#) or [IdentityTheft.gov](#).

For information on Alabama's disaster recovery, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4684](#). Follow FEMA on Twitter at [FEMA Region 4 \(@femaregion4\) / Twitter](#) and at [facebook.com/fema](#).

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