

CONSUMER ALERT: Attorney General Jeff Landry Warns of Potential Storm Scams

BATON ROUGE, LA – Attorney General Jeff Landry is alerting consumers about the potential for home repair and other scams following the severe storms that devastated parts of South Louisiana this week.

“Unfortunately, the aftermath of a disaster attracts opportunists and scammers. Criminals posing as inspectors, government officials, or contractors may prey on consumers in an effort to steal their money or personal information,” said General Landry. “Please take the time to ensure your contractor is licensed and insured and the work is guaranteed in writing.”

General Landry urges consumers and businesses to follow some simple steps when looking for contractors to make repairs:

- **Get at least three bids.** Be certain each contractor bids on exactly the same work. If one contractor bids on more work than others, make a note of it. All bids should be itemized and detailed.
- **Know the contractor.** Always require the contractor show you proof of insurance such as workman’s compensation and general liability insurance. Call that insurer to confirm coverage. Verify the contractor’s address and ask for references of previous customers, inspecting work done for them when possible. Make sure the contractor is licensed through the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors at www.lslbc.louisiana.gov.
- **Do not agree to a large down payment.** A reputable contractor will not normally require a down payment over 10% to 25% of the total price. If possible, accompany the contractor to the building supply store and pay for the materials yourself. And have the materials delivered directly to your home or jobsite rather than the contractor’s shop.
- **Get a guarantee and a contract in writing.** Be sure the contractor guarantees his or her work in writing. Do not accept verbal agreements. Any changes in the contract should be in writing and initialed by both parties. Keep a signed, legible copy of the contract in a safe place.
- **Do not pay cash.** Always pay by check or money order and keep a receipt. Write all checks to the company, not the individual worker.

For more information about contractor fraud and other consumer-related information, visit www.AGJeffLandry.com or call Attorney General Jeff Landry’s Consumer Protection Hotline at 800-351-4889.

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