



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Arizona Division of Emergency Management
5636 East McDowell Road, Building M5101, Phoenix, Arizona 85008-3495
(602) 244-0504 1-800-411-2336



Janice K. Brewer
GOVERNOR

MG Hugo E. Salazar
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

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Public Information Contact
Judy Kioski: 602-509-5216

State Cautions Against Unsolicited Contractors Offering Damage Recovery Work

Phoenix – The State of Arizona warns residents to be cautious of unsolicited contractors coming to your door and offering to repair or clean-up storm damage or debris.

Scam artists often try to capitalize on severe storms by exploiting homeowners coping with damage. Unsolicited contractors may claim to have materials leftover from another project. The pitch to the homeowner includes a “discount” so the contractor won’t have to discard materials.

The homeowner is typically given a verbal quote, but never a written estimate for the job. After the job is complete, the homeowner may be presented with a bill hundreds or even thousands of dollars more than the quote. The person will often demand immediate payment and, in some cases, refuse to leave in an attempt to pressure the homeowner into paying in full.

Arizonans should think twice before allowing anyone who shows up uninvited to work on your home. Instead, the Attorney General offers the following tips when hiring a contractor:

- Consult the Arizona Registrar of Contractors, www.azroc.gov, to ensure the contractor is licensed.
- Ask for written estimates from at least three contractors.
- Request a list of references, and check them before agreeing to hire anyone.
- Make sure the scope of the project, the price and any other relevant terms are spelled out in a written contract.
- Never allow yourself to be hurried into making a decision. No reputable contractor will pressure you into a quick hiring decision.

If you believe yourself victim of fraud, contact the Attorney General’s Office in Phoenix at 602-542-5763; in Tucson at 520-628-6504; or outside the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas at 1-800-352-8431.

Consumers can file complaints on the Attorney General’s website, www.azag.gov, and with Attorney General satellite offices across the state. Locations and hours are posted to the website.