



FEMA

News Release

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BEING ALERT TO FRAUD FOLLOWING SUPERSTORM SANDY HELPS RECOVERY AND TAXPAYERS

TRENTON, N.J. — While the vast majority of people who have registered and received FEMA assistance have genuine needs, the rush to get millions in disaster assistance to those affected by Superstorm Sandy, sadly, presents opportunities for dishonest people to defraud taxpayers.

Fraud increases the cost of recovery after a disaster and gives money to those without disaster-related losses, emergency management officials warn.

The Inspector General for the Federal Emergency Management Agency investigates complaints of fraud, waste or abuse involving FEMA contracts, programs or personnel. FEMA maintains a toll-free Fraud Hotline at 866-720-5721.

Potential cases of fraud or misuse of funds can be referred to the U.S. Justice Department for prosecution. Penalties for felony offenses can be severe.

These are some examples of complaints that are typically filed with the FEMA Office of the Inspector General:

- Applicants used false names and multiple and/or fictitious addresses;
- Applicants claimed losses they didn't sustain or to which they were not entitled;
- Applicants did not use FEMA money for the intended purposes;
- Municipal officials used FEMA money for their own benefit;
- FEMA checks were stolen; and
- Applicants received duplicate payments from FEMA and their insurance companies.

Complaints can also be filed by writing to:

National Center for Disaster Fraud
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4909

Those who visit the Office of the Inspector General Web site at www.fema.gov/ig/hotline.shtm will find an option to submit a complaint using Internet electronic mail. Those who submit complaints via e-mail must waive confidentiality because of the non-secure nature of Internet electronic mail systems.

(MORE)

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

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