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TENNESSEE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS ISSUES WARNING REGARDING DISASTER RECOVERY SCAMS

Nashville- In the wake of a tragic week across the State, the Tennessee Attorney General's Office wants to ensure that only legitimate businesses and charities are fundraising to help victims.

You are urged to keep these tips in mind:

- Be wary of fundraisers or contractors going door-to-door, especially those contractors who ask to receive payment for services upfront or offer deep discounts.
- Don't fall for high-pressure sales tactics; urgency is a red flag.
- Be cautious of unknown, out-of-state phone numbers.
- If you are hiring a contractor, verify proper licensing: verify.tn.gov. Ask questions and get references from people you trust. Consider searching the [BBB's website](#) for ratings and reviews.

Charity fraud is another common scam that often shows up in response to natural disasters. Scammers may solicit donations for victims, but pocket the money instead. Signs of a charity scam may include:

- A "copy-cat" name that sounds like a reputable charity. Some scammers use names that closely resemble those of respected, legitimate organizations.
- Don't let anyone rush you into donating.
- Cash-only donations. Instead, make checks payable to the charitable organization, and not to an individual collecting a donation.
- The caller refuses to disclose the organization's mission, or how the money will be used.
- Lack of proof that your contribution is tax-deductible.
- If you're donating via a crowdfunding site, find out who's behind the request. Try finding out who the campaign organizer is. If you can't find them online, or the details you find don't match what they're saying on the campaign page, be suspicious.
- Keep a record of all donations made. Review your bank statements closely to make sure you're only charged the amount you agreed to donate.

Before donating, confirm you are dealing with a reputable charity through the [Tennessee Division of Charitable Solicitations](#).

Find a complete list of consumer disaster recovery tips [here](#).

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