



September 18, 2013

CONSUMER ALERT
Fraudulent Charities for Flood Victims

We all want to help Colorado flood victims, but be aware that disasters like these provide great opportunities for scam artists who exploit your compassion to line their own pockets.

Urgent appeals to help flood victims that you receive may not be legitimate. These solicitations may be made in person, by phone, mail or e-mail, on websites or on social networking sites.

- Be wary of phone calls soliciting donations to help flood victims. Tell solicitors that you don't do charitable donations over the phone and hang up. If you choose to stay on the phone, ask if the caller is a paid fundraiser, who they work for and what percentage of your donation goes to the charity and to the fundraiser. If you don't get a clear answer or don't like the answer, terminate the call.
- Never give your credit card or financial information to anyone who contacts you by phone or through the Internet.
- Never send cash. You can't be sure the organization will receive your donation and you won't have a record for tax purposes.
- Donate to charities you know and trust. Be wary of charities that seem to have sprung up overnight to help flood victims.
- Verify that charities are legitimate. You can verify that the organization is registered in the state's database: <http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/charities/charitableHome.html>
This database also lists suspended charities, solicitors and fundraisers.
Charities also may be checked out through these websites: [Better Business Bureau's \(BBB\) Wise Giving Alliance](#), [Charity Navigator](#), [Charity Watch](#), or [GuideStar](#).

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