

Home Repair SCAMS !

Be aware that the recent weather related storms in the Columbus area will become a magnet for various scam artists.

The two major scams to **BE ON THE LOOKOUT** for include the following:

HOME REPAIR SCAMS

- Use only LOCAL home repair companies.
- DO NOT use out-of state repair people (unless friends or relatives).
- Ask repair people for REFERENCES. Check the references.
- Carefully control purchase of repair materials. Ask for receipts.
- Be wary if repair people ask for large payment in advance.
- **Be Alert and report if a contractor states he will assist you in obtaining a FEMA construction loan. FEMA does not give loans. They give grants in varying amounts.**

CHARITY SCAMS

- False "Storm victim donations" scams may begin in this area.
- We encourage you to support actual victims, BUT PLEASE donate only to reputable charities.
- If someone calls asking for donations, DO NOT give your CREDIT CARD number over the phone!!
- When in doubt, ask if you can donate clothes, cleaning supplies, etc. instead of cash.

FOR MORE INFORMATION YOU MAY CALL :

To see if a repair person has a valid Home Improvement Contractor License :
Call the **City of Columbus Building Inspections Office : (614) 645-6083**

To see if a repair person has had complaints made about their work :
Call the **Better Business Bureau : (614) 486-6336 or 1 (800) 759-2400**

To report fraud, waste or abuse related to FEMA claims:
Call **FEMA (toll free) : (800) 323-8603**

If you have information concerning a scam that is going on now, please contact City of Columbus, Division of Police Fraud and Forgery Unit (614) 645-4751