

Natural Disaster Fraud and Scams

Hurricanes often disrupt power, phone lines, and internet services, and people may need immediate repairs to their homes, vehicles, or property. The aftermath of a hurricane can be overwhelming and emotionally draining. Individuals are often vulnerable to various types of fraud and scams due to the widespread chaos and the need for quick recovery.

These factors make individuals particularly susceptible to the following fraud schemes:

Contractor Fraud

- Fraudulent contractors may offer repair services, demand upfront payments, and then either perform substandard work or disappear entirely.

Government Assistance Scams

- Fraudsters may impersonate FEMA officials or other government agencies, asking for personal information or money in exchange for aid.

Charity Scams

- Scammers may set up fake charities through social media to exploit the goodwill of those wanting to help hurricane victims.

Price Gouging

- Some businesses may inflate prices on essential goods like water, food, and fuel post-hurricane.

Fake Insurance Adjusters

- Fraudsters may pose as insurance adjusters, requesting fees for services or access to people's homes.

Phishing and Identity Theft

- Scammers may send emails or texts pretending to be from utility companies, financial institutions, or other service providers.

Where can I find more information?

 USF: [Hurricane Milton Frequently Asked Questions](#)

 Florida Attorney General: [Consumer Alert: Disaster-Related Scams](#)

 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): [Disaster Fraud and Scams](#)

 National Center for Disaster Fraud: Report scams by phone at (866) 720-5721 or online through a [disaster complaint form](#)

How can I report general USF fraud or abuse?

 Report general USF fraud & abuse through the [EthicsPoint](#) hotline at (866) 974-8411.