

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Florida Home Builders Urge Caution: DON'T BECOME A VICTIM A SECOND TIME

TALLAHASSEE – The storm may be over, but the worst may be yet to come. Unlicensed contractors have taken to the streets in communities devastated by Hurricane Irma, and are preying on vulnerable Floridians.

The Florida Home Builders Association (FHBA) urges Floridians affected by Hurricane Irma to be on the lookout for dishonest individuals posing as licensed contractors.

“Hurricane victims should be on alert for unlicensed contractors, especially door-to-door solicitors, that require large sums of money up front,” said Jeremy Stewart, President of the FHBA and a Crestview home builder. “Licensed contractors will show proof of insurance and licensure, their license can be verified with the State of Florida, and they will never ask for money up front.”

Unlicensed contracting is illegal, and it can be easily avoided if the appropriate precautions are taken. FHBA, a member of the Disaster Contractors Network, encourages homeowners to follow these safety measures:

- Obtain at least three estimates from licensed and bonded contractors.
- Get the estimate in writing,
- Ask for and check references,
- Ask for proof of insurance,
- Get a written contract, and
- Make sure all work that requires city or county inspection is officially approved in writing before final payment is made.

Homeowners are encouraged to verify a contractor’s license by contacting the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) at 850.487.1395 or www.myfloridalicense.com. To report unlicensed activity, contact DBPR at 866.532.1440. Additionally, homeowners can report incidents of price gouging by calling 866.9NO-SCAM

Established in 1949, the Florida Home Builders Association is affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and Florida's local/regional homebuilder associations. FHBA, along with its affiliates, work to create the best possible economic and regulatory environment for members to succeed.

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