



MEMA



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FEMA

Disaster News

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DISASTER SURVIVORS: BE SURE THAT CONTRACTORS ARE LICENSED

CLINTON, Miss. – Contractors are critical to the recovery of Mississippi residents from this spring’s tornadoes, storms and flooding, but before hiring one homeowners should make sure a contractor is licensed.

The Mississippi State Board of Contractors requires that residential building contractors, roofers and remodelers hold a license to do business in the state. That applies whether the contractor is local or based out of state.

“The first thing you should do if a contractor offers to repair your property is ask to see their Mississippi contractor’s license,” said Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director Mike Womack. “If they don’t have one, don’t do business with them.”

The board lists nearly 3,500 residential building contractors on its website, www.msbc.us. There also are more than 1,200 remodelers and more than 20 roofers listed. Out-of-state contractors who want to do business in Mississippi can obtain a state license by applying and meeting the criteria.

“Residents should also ask to see proof that contractors have Mississippi workers compensation insurance,” said FEMA’s Federal Coordinating Officer Terry L. Quarles. “If they don’t have it, the property owner could be liable for the costs if anyone is injured while working on their property.”

The Mississippi State Board of Contractors website recommends these additional steps when choosing a contractor:

- Get bids from three contractors.
- Ask for and check their references.
- Get a written contract.
- Don’t pay more than 10 percent down or \$1,000, whichever is less.
- Never pay with cash.
- Don’t let payments get ahead of the work completed.
- Contact the Mississippi State Board of Contractors if you have a complaint.

(MORE)

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FEMA asks grant recipients to keep receipts for all expenditures made from FEMA grant money for at least three years. The money can be spent only for specified eligible costs.

More information about making disaster-related repairs or rebuilding after a disaster is available online at www.fema.gov/rebuild.

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

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