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# HURRICANE IRENE FLOOD EMERGENCY ADVISORY

During times of disaster, New Jersey's consumers must remain on the alert to protect themselves against fraud.

The Office of the Attorney General and New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs ask that you make the attached documents available to all individuals who enter your building or office, and allow them to use this information as a resource for self-protection.

The attached fact sheet includes information about home repair scams that target homeowners seeking to repair the damage from floods and other disasters. Unscrupulous contractors can leave homeowners with costs in the tens of thousands of dollars, and can leave work unfinished and homes unsafe.

The fact sheet also includes information about price gouging. Consumers should be aware that New Jersey's price gouging law makes it illegal to sell merchandise at excessive price increases during a State of Emergency or within 30 days of the termination of the State of Emergency.

The price gouging law deems price increases excessive if they are more than 10 percent higher than the price at which a good or service was sold in the usual course of business prior to the State of Emergency; or, if additional costs are imposed by suppliers or logistical concerns, the increase is more than 10 percent of the amount of markup from cost, compared with the markup ordinarily applied.

Consumers with concerns or complaints about scams or excessive pricing should call the Division of Consumer Affairs hotline at **800-242-5846**. Consumers may also fill out and mail in the complaint form enclosed with this information packet.

Please distribute this packet to your local municipalities, police departments, OEMs, shelters, schools, hardware stores, and locations that would gain the most visibility. Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Thomas R. Calcagni  
Director