



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Colorado Department of Law  
Attorney General John W. Suthers

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ATTORNEY GENERAL SUTHERS WARNS POTENTIAL FLOOD LOOTERS TO EXPECT HARSH SENTENCES**

*Cautions Coloradans not to Fall Victim to Flood-Related Scams*

**DENVER**—[Colorado Attorney General John Suthers](#) warned any potential looters of homes or property impacted by the floods to expect lengthy prison sentences for their crimes.

“While accounts of looting are minimal, and that is good news, my message to any would be looter is to expect a harsh penalty for committing such an abhorrent crime,” said Suthers. “In the case of the Waldo Canyon fire, one looter received a 48-year prison sentence and another was sentenced to 72-years,” noted Suthers.

In addition, the Attorney General’s Office is reminding consumers that the recent state floods has the potential to bring out scam artists who exploit natural disasters to take advantage of people. Typically, the scams are on two fronts: charitable giving and home repairs.

“The floods will bring out the best in most, but unfortunately the worst in others,” said Suthers. “After enduring this natural disaster, I am reminding Coloradans that scammers are out there and that consumer awareness is the most powerful tool we have to prevent victimization.”

The best way to contribute to the flood-relief efforts is through [HelpColoradoNow.org](http://HelpColoradoNow.org) an initiative that brings together government agencies and non-profit organizations to assist communities affected by disasters. To ensure that a charitable contribution is truly helping disaster victims, Coloradans should visit [www.checkthecharity.com](http://www.checkthecharity.com) to ensure their donation is going to a legitimate organization registered with the state.

After the immediate hazards of a natural disaster subside, other problems typically arise regarding roofing and home repair scams. A typical scenario involves an uninvited door-to-door solicitation from a contractor claiming to have a “special price” on roofing, siding, windows, asphalt, etc. The person will pressure the homeowner into acting “right now” and demand all or most of the price be paid up front. Upon receipt of payment, the “contractor” will usually disappear having performed little or none of the promised work or the work done is of poor quality.

To guard against fraud, Coloradans are reminded to:

- Never allow an uninvited contractor into their home to “look around” or make an “inspection.”
- Never get pressured into making an immediate decision whether to hire a contractor to do any work on your home.
- Before spending any significant amount of money on home repairs, obtain bids from at least three different contractors.
- Demand that your final selection sign a written contract that spells out when the work will be started, the quality and type of all materials to be used, and when the work will be completed. Insist on making partial payments under the contract as specific work is completed to your satisfaction.
- Require your contractor to obtain mechanic’s lien waivers from all suppliers and subcontractors.

If someone believes he or she has been defrauded or victimized by a business or nonprofit, they are encouraged to file a report by visiting [www.coloradoattorneygeneral.gov/complaint](http://www.coloradoattorneygeneral.gov/complaint) or by calling 800-222-4444. Consumers may also [sign up](#) to receive the Consumer Fraud Bulletin for year-round communications.

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