



DenverDA

Mitchell R. Morrissey, District Attorney - Second Judicial District
201 W. Colfax Avenue, Dept. 801, Denver, CO 80202

Bus. Phone: 720-913-9000
Fax: 720-913-9035



Mitch Morrissey
Denver District Attorney

Fraud Advisory

Charitable Giving Guidelines for Disaster Relief

The wildfires in Colorado are generating great unease and a desire by many to help those who have been evicted, or have lost their homes. When wildfires swept through Colorado in 2012, on-line scams began popping up days before the smoke had settled. To avoid becoming a victim of charity fraud, consider the following guidelines before making a contribution:

Verify the legitimacy of nonprofit organizations that appeal for funds. This can be done directly by using various internet-based resources, such as the Better Business Bureau, www.bbb.org and Charity Navigator, www.charitynavigator.org.

Contribute only to charities that have a track record of providing efficient and expedient disaster relief. Several fraudulent charities often use names similar to well-known non-profit organizations in an effort to deceive the public into believing the charity is legitimate. Note that Colorado charities and paid solicitors who intend on raising \$25,000 or more a year must be registered with the Secretary of State Licensing Division before participating in any fundraising activities within the state. To check on a charity, email the Secretary of State's Office at sos.licensing@sos.state.co.us, or call the office at (303) 894-2200.

Participate only in fundraising efforts undertaken by individuals you know and trust. Charity Navigator, a national nonprofit evaluator, recommends only giving to the fund-raising efforts if you know who set up the fund and are confident that the money will get to the right place.

Do not respond to unsolicited incoming emails, and never click on links contained within those messages. Also, be cautious of emails or networking sites that claim to show pictures of the disaster areas in attached files. These files may contain viruses.

Never give your personal or financial information to anyone who solicits contributions. Doing so puts you at risk of identity theft.

Denver DA's Fraud Line: 720-913-9179

 Follow us on Twitter @DenverScamAlert

June, 2013