



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Peoria, IL** – The Home Builders Association of Greater Peoria (HBAGP) would like to express its concern to the local communities impacted by recent storm damage. As our communities begin to work at healing and rebuilding, there are some important facts to keep in mind to protect the homeowner.

In any disaster that happens across the country in any given year, homeowners unwittingly become victims again to fraud. Areas experiencing natural disasters are often inundated by people outside of the local area who represent themselves as helpful, knowledgeable contractors. In many instances, they offer cheap and fast repair work for cash or a low price. The reality of the time spent in the storm damaged area is that they come to town to make easy money and then move on. Remember the old adage, “If it seems too good to be true, it probably is.”

Some signs to watch for include contractors who ask for payment in full before the job starts, or the payment of cash to a salesperson instead of waiting for payment by check or after insurance settlements are received by the homeowner. Others offer special low prices only good today, or insist that they specifically chose your area to help, and your neighbors are already on board. Homeowners who hand cash to these types of unscrupulous contractors are often left with an uncompleted job, or shoddy work done, and the contractor is gone and cannot be found.

How do you protect yourself? Homeowners should always be able to verify the business address of a contractor through local resources. The contractor should be able to provide references of previous customers. There should be a written agreement between the homeowner and contractor that specifically outlines any initial monies due as a deposit on the work, the final job price, and the scope of the work to be done for that price. Many times the agreement will include a time frame for the work as well.

In times of disaster, don't let stressful feelings about the situation cause you to make an uneducated decision. Most importantly, don't make impulse decisions on home repair even in the midst of storm destruction. Professional contractors who are part of the community are at the ready to offer you the knowledge and resources needed to repair or rebuild your home to your specific family needs.

Members of the Home Builders Association of Greater Peoria are residents of the area and have knowledge of local regulations and building codes. They are established businesses looking to help you rebuild your home or provide you with the products and services you need to get your home together again. For a list of local companies that can offer professional contractor services for home repair, home remodeling or the rebuilding of your home, visit the Association's web site at [www.peoriahba.com](http://www.peoriahba.com)

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