




GREGORY D. TOTTEN
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

www.vcdistrictattorney.com

Twitter: @VenturaDAOffice

Contact: Danny Lo
Deputy District Attorney
Telephone: (805) 662-1714
E-mail: Danny.Lo@ventura.org
Approved: JLM 
Date: Thursday, January 4, 2018
Release No.: 18-003

District Attorney Warns of FEMA Scams

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Gregory D. Totten warned Ventura County residents to be aware of possible scams involving fraudulent Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance. Following the fires in Northern California, some victims discovered that their personal identifying information were used to file fraudulent FEMA applications. When they attempted to apply for FEMA assistance, they learned that someone had already applied under their name. Others who had not filed applications for assistance reported that “FEMA-affiliated” inspectors came to their homes to ask about their applications.

Residents should be aware that FEMA will not send inspectors to your residence unless you have filed an application for assistance. FEMA inspectors will not collect personal identifying information or bank account information at your residence. This information will only be requested when a person fills out the application online or at a Local Assistance Center. In addition, all FEMA employees and contractors will have federally-issued photo identification badges.

If an individual shows up at your home to conduct a FEMA inspection, and you have not filed an application for assistance, FEMA requests that you immediately contact the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General, at (800) 323-8603 or www.oig.dhs.gov. If you file an application for assistance, but find that someone has already filed an application in your name, FEMA requests that you call the Disaster Fraud Line at (866) 720-5721.

If you have been a victim of a FEMA scam, you may also be a victim of identity theft. It is recommended that you report identity theft to your local police department. In addition, you should contact the three major credit bureaus, Equifax at (800) 525-6285, Experian at (888) 397-3742, and TransUnion at (800) 680-7289, and consider a credit monitoring service or a credit freeze for protection against new accounts being opened in your name. For additional information on what to do if you suspect you are a victim of identity theft, visit the California Attorney General's website at <https://oag.ca.gov/idtheft/facts/victim-checklist>.

###

The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 280 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and other professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.

Follow the Ventura County District Attorney's Office on Twitter @VenturaDAOffice