

Consumer Alert: Storm damage Could Attract Illegal Contractors

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt is urging Kansas residents to use caution to avoid scams by transient contractors following this week's severe weather across the state.

"After storm damage, our instinct is to clean up and make repairs as quickly as possible," Schmidt said. "When considering roofing work on a home or business, it is important that consumers make sure their roofing contractor is properly registered before signing any contract or having any work done. Consumers should request a copy of their roofer's registration certificate and then should check our consumer protection website to confirm that the registration remains active."

Staff from the attorney general's Roofing Registration Unit have been in contact with many local officials affected by this week's storms to assist in responding to contractors and consumers.

The requirement to register with the attorney general's office is in addition to any other local requirements that may be imposed by cities or counties. The online directory of registrations is available at www.InYourCornerKansas.org.

The Kansas Roofing Contractor Registration Act was passed during the 2013 legislative session and took effect July 1, 2013. With few exceptions, the law requires roofing contractors to obtain a registration certificate from the Kansas Attorney General in order to legally provide commercial or residential roofing services for a fee in Kansas. It is designed to ensure that legitimate roofing contractors are complying with state requirements, such as carrying appropriate insurance, and to help prevent fly-by-night operators from taking advantage of Kansas consumers.

Working with a roofer that is registered is a bare minimum to help prevent problems. The attorney general's office also recommends the following tips in dealing with any transient contractors, including roofers:

- Get recommendations and references.**
- Get at least three written estimates from different contractors.**
- Check contractor complaint records with the Better Business Bureau.**
- Understand your payment options and right to cancel.**

Any Kansans who have problems with roofing contractors or other companies that follow storms may file a request for the attorney general's Consumer Protection Division to investigate at (800) 432-2310 or www.InYourCornerKansas.org. The attorney general requests that Kansans promptly report any unregistered person or company attempting to sell roofing services.