State Response to Historic Flood Event, AG/FEMA Issue Scam Warning

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 18, 2016 MEDIA CONTACT: Mike Steele mike.steele@la.gov 225-788-0095
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**State Response to Historic Flood Event, AG/FEMA Issue Scam Warning BATON ROUGE (March 18, 2016) –
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**The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) continues to coordinate the state's response to the current flood event impacting much of the state. New reports supplied by parishes indicate more than 11,000 homes have received some type of flood damage. Governor John Bel Edwards' request that President Barack Obama expand the existing federal declaration for the State of Louisiana to include another three parishes has been granted. Allen, Ascension, and Calcasieu make up the three new parishes included in the president's declaration.
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**26 Louisiana parishes are now eligible for Federal assistance. More parishes may be added as part of the recovery process. Any disaster, unfortunately, results in an increased risk for scams as cleanup and repairs begin. The Louisiana Attorney General's Office offers this advice to residents impacted by the flooding:
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**? Do not donate to any charity that asks for cash or wired donations and does not provide proof your contribution would be tax-deductible. You may search the IRS website to determine which organizations are eligible to receive tax deductible contributions at https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/. ? Be wary of charities that arise immediately after a natural disaster. Learn more about a charity's trustworthiness on the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance website at http://give.org/.
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**? Insist on a face-to-face transaction with a rental agreement. Visit the physical location of the advertised rental property and know many con artists advertise March 18, 2016 rental property on social media sites, requiring the potential renter to wire money. ? Get at least three itemized, detailed bids from licensed contractors. Make sure the contractor is licensed through the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors at www.lslbc.louisiana.gov.
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