

FRAUD ALERT!

Flood Repair Fraud

With heavy rains and flooding in many areas of Buck County, it is important to be cautious when hiring clean up specialty companies, landscapers or any other type of contractor that may be needed to repair flood damage.

Unfortunately, conditions such as a natural disaster may bring out scam and con artists who take advantage of a bad situation and prey on victims who are already under stress. The Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force offers the following tips when hiring contractors:

1. Always get *EVERYTHING* in writing as far as the scope of the work. Take the time to read the entire contract or proposal. Make sure there is a specific start date and completion date. This is important in Pennsylvania. Even if the completion date is further off than you would like, it sets a deadline for everyone concerned.
2. When dealing with a Pennsylvania contractor, check the contract and paperwork for a physical address for the business. Be leery of contractors who only list a post office box. Also, make sure you have an actual land line phone number, not just a cell phone number.
3. Contract change orders – If the scope of the work changes, make sure everything is in writing including any added cost.
4. All contracts should be signed by both parties.
5. Keep a written record of all work time and relevant phone calls, including who you spoke with and what was discussed.
6. Before you let in anyone who claims to have been sent by a utility company to inspect your home, ask for identification. Representatives of utilities and reputable businesses will have proper identification. When in doubt, call the company to verify the identity of the worker.

BUCKS COUNTY CRIMES AGAINST OLDER ADULTS TASK FORCE-
FIGHTING ABUSE, NEGLECT, AND EXPLOITATION OF OLDER ADULTS IN BUCKS COUNTY

Bucks County District Attorney's Office
215-348-6344
Bucks County Consumer Protection
215-348-6060
Bucks County Register of Wills
215-348-6265

Bucks County Area Agency on Aging
215-348-0510
Network of Victim Assistance
1-800-675-6900
Bucks County Coroner
215-348-3852