



## Alabama Storm Victims Warned to be on Guard Against Home Repair Fraud and Price Gouging

(MONTGOMERY) – In the wake of Hurricane Sally, the Alabama Home Builders Licensure Board and the Alabama Attorney General’s Office caution consumers of the potential for scams, fraud and price gouging during post-storm damage cleanup, repair, and rebuilding.

Officials with the Home Builders Licensure Board and the Attorney General’s Office joined Baldwin County District Attorney Robert Wilters and State Representative Matt Simpson of Daphne in Fairhope today to warn coastal Alabamians to be on the lookout for fraud as they hire workers to repair storm damage and purchase needed items.

The Home Builders Licensure Board encourages consumers to use licensed home builders and roofers as required by law to avoid being taken advantage of by unscrupulous operators.

“Alabama Home Builders Licensure Board Executive Director, J.R. “Chip” Carden, announces the activation of the Board’s emergency roofer license. “Based on the Governor’s disaster declaration, the Home Builders Licensure Board has activated its emergency roofer license for Mobile and Baldwin Counties in an effort to speed recovery and to protect Alabama consumers damaged by Hurricane Sally.” said Carden.

On September 23, Carden authorized a waiver of requirements for issuance of a roofer license pursuant to Board regulations to allow for emergency roofers licenses to be issued in Baldwin and Mobile counties only.

The Home Builders Licensure Board and the Attorney General’s Office also outlined steps consumers should take when working with a contractor builder on storm damage repairs:

- Ask if they are licensed. Ask to see the card! The HBLB license is a credit card-sized license – a sample is listed on HBLB’s website. You may check on a builder’s license status by calling 1-800-304-0853, or by visiting [www.hblb.alabama.gov](http://www.hblb.alabama.gov).
- Ask for and check references, especially if the builder makes unsolicited contact with you or is from out-of-town.
- Make sure quotes and contracts are in writing. Under state law, licensed homebuilders must use a written contract. Make sure it includes the contractor’s full name, address, telephone number, a description of the work to be performed, starting and estimated completion dates, and the total cost of the job.



- NEVER make a full payment or substantial down payment up front. Do not make a final payment until you are satisfied, and all subcontractors have been paid. If they tell you that more money is needed in advance, be wary.
- Ask for proof of insurance, including workers compensation and general liability.

The Attorney General's Office also warned consumers of price gouging in areas affected by the storm. The state's price gouging law went into effect on September 14 with Governor Ivey's declaration of a state of emergency for Hurricane Sally.

"We obviously sustained a lot of damage from Sally, and the residents of Baldwin County will need a lot of help cleaning up, repairing and rebuilding their homes," said Baldwin County District Attorney Robert Wilters. "We are so appreciative of the power crews and volunteers who have already been here helping and more to come. But what we don't need, and we don't want are scammers. If you take advantage of homeowners by price gouging, home and roof repair scams, and flat stealing from them, we will prosecute you! I encourage residents in the county to be cautious and patient. Work with your insurance company, check to make sure contractors are license, ask a lot of questions, and if you believe a contractor is not in here for the right reasons, call law enforcement."

Alabama's price gouging law prohibits the "unconscionable pricing" of items for sale or rent. Although what constitutes an unconscionable price is not specifically set forth under state law, a price that is 25 percent or more above the average price charged in the same area within the last 30 days – and which was not due to legitimate increases in product supply costs - is a 'prima facie' case of unconscionable pricing.

"You may report concerns of alleged fraud or price gouging to my office for investigation," said Attorney General Marshall. "To fill out a complaint online, visit [www.alabamaag.gov](http://www.alabamaag.gov) and look for the "consumer complaint" link. You may also dial our Consumer Interest Division toll-free, 1-800-392-5658."

For information about home repair licensing and potential fraud, contact the Home Builders Licensure Board, 445 Herron Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36104, (334) 242-2230 or 1-800-304-0853 or [www.hblb.alabama.gov](http://www.hblb.alabama.gov).

*Please see next page for images of license cards.*

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Licensee Painting Company, Inc.  
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Anytown, AL 36000

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Signature of Licensee

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as a **SINGLE TRADE NON-STRUCTURAL**  
Residential Home Builder/Remodeler

**HOME BUILDERS LICENSURE BOARD**  
P.O. Box 303605 • Montgomery, AL 36130-3605  
Telephone (334) 242-2230 or 1-800-304-0853  
Facsimile: (334) 263-1397  
[www.hblb.alabama.gov](http://www.hblb.alabama.gov)

HOME BUILDERS LICENSURE BOARD  
**CERTIFICATE OF LICENSE**

File Number 12345

Licensee Construction Co., Inc.  
John Doe Licensee  
1111 Licensee Drive  
Anytown, AL 36000

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Signature of Licensee

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File Number 12347

Licensee Roofing Company, Inc.  
James Doe Licensee  
3333 Licensee Drive  
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**EFFECTIVE UNTIL DECEMBER 31, 2020**

Signature of Licensee

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