Fake charities pop up quickly in the aftermath of a natural disaster or weather emergency. Scammers jump at the opportunity to exploit our sense of wanting to help.

How it works:

- Scammers use the same techniques as trusted charities to reach you – in person, by mail, over the phone, online, by text, or by e-mail, so be mindful across all of these methods.
- The name of the fake charity may closely resemble the name of a real charity.
- The fake charity might ask you to wire money or give cash – see this as a red flag.

What you should know:

- Real charities need your support, and they, like us, lose out when a scammer intervenes.
- Scammers will put pressure on you to act quickly, before you have a chance to think through your decision or do any research.

What you should do:

- Most people don’t research charities before they donate. But it’s easy to do – check out charities at www.give.org or www.charitynavigator.org before giving any money.
- If you are approached in person, ask for identification and details about the charity, including its full name and address, and how they will use the funds. If the person can’t furnish this information, close your door or walk away.
- The Federal Trade Commission suggests making an annual donation plan to list out which causes you will support and which reputable charities will receive your money.