

Dear Homeowners Association,

The Georgia Secretary of State's office this week issued the press release below following flooding in many parts of Georgia. I want to remind Georgians about state contractor licensing laws, and warn consumers about potential contractor scams.

Please distribute this information to your members through your association newsletter, website, or other method of communication. If you have any questions, please contact my office at 404-656-2881.

Sincerely,
Karen Handel
Georgia Secretary of State

Secretary of State NEWS

Karen Handel, Georgia Secretary of State



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Secretary of State Handel Reminds Georgians about Contractor Licensing Law, Warns Consumers about Potential Contractor Scams Following Recent Floods

Atlanta – Georgia Secretary of State Karen Handel recently reminded consumers affected by recent flooding across the state that certain types of residential and general contractors require state licensure, and warned home and business owners to be wary of potential scams.

Typical flood damage that requires a contractor to hold a state-issued license includes major structural repair, electrical, plumbing and HVAC. Consumers can verify that a contractor is properly licensed or file a complaint against a licensed contractor online at: <http://sos.georgia.gov/plb>.

Additionally, state law exempts some types of construction work from licensure. Typical flood damage that does not require a licensed contractor includes roofing, painting, sheetrock, siding, mold remediation, flooring, foundation waterproofing and septic tank repair. Septic tank repair must be conducted by a person certified by the Georgia Department of Community Health.

Consumers should know that it is illegal for a homeowner to obtain a building permit and use an unlicensed contractor to manage construction services. The person or business who obtains the permit could also assume the majority of liability for the project, leaving the consumer with little to no legal recourse.

When hiring someone to conduct construction work, watch out for these red flags that you may be dealing with a dishonest individual:

- A person going door-to-door selling their services.
- A person who offers services for a short time only, which makes consumers feel rushed and unable to research the contractor.
- Pressure to pay for more than half of the cost up front.
- Refusal or reluctance to set out complete and specific contract terms in writing.
- Lack of permanent and verifiable name, address and phone number of the business.

For additional consumer tips, please visit the Secretary of State's Professional Licensing Boards website at: <http://sos.georgia.gov>.