



Milwaukee County Office of the Sheriff

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NEWS RELEASE

David A. Clarke Jr.
Sheriff

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Sheriff Clarke Warns Against Basement Contracting Scams

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr. warns citizens to beware of unscrupulous contractors. It is not uncommon after a disaster like we recently experienced to have fly-by-night contractors prey on people who are in an emotional, traumatized state after an incident such as severe basement flooding.

Our advice is to make sure that the contractor is bonded. You may want to check with the Better Business Bureau, (414) 847-6000, for a reference. Senior citizens are exceptionally susceptible to these scam artists. You'll hear things like, "Your basement walls will collapse in the next hour if you don't have it replaced."

Another piece of advice is to get a second estimate from a reputable contractor. Be suspicious of contractors who contact you, and never do business with any contractor who:

1. Is requiring full payment before the work begins.
2. That will only take cash. Reputable contractors will take credit cards or a payment plan.

Do not let anyone into your home soliciting basement work, waterproofing, mold detection, etc., that you have not called and who shows up unsolicited.

Please help us get this message out to prevent people from becoming victimized during this disaster. If you have any questions regarding a possible fraudulent contractor, please call the Sheriff's Office at (414) 278-4732.

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