

Crisis factsheet – *information to consider during or after a catastrophic event*

## Fundraising scams

### Watch out for fake fundraisers

When donating money to help people affected by a crisis, make sure you are dealing with a legitimate fundraiser. Fake fundraisers, also known as charity scams, have taken advantage of public generosity after past disasters.

### How do charity scams work?

They may:

- approach you on the street or at your home, pretending to collect for a legitimate charity
- set up false websites or send letters similar to those used by real charities
- telephone you or email you to ask for donations.

### Warning signs

- You receive an email asking for donations but the sender's email address is different (either very different or perhaps only slightly different) from a legitimate charity's address.
- A collector makes a face-to-face approach but does not have any identification or has forged identification.
- The collector cannot or will not give you details about the charity, such as its full name, licence number, address or phone number.
- The collector becomes defensive when asked what the charity does and how much of the donation will be taken up by costs.
- The collector asks for cash, will not accept a cheque or asks for any cheque to be made out to them rather than to the charity.
- Illegitimate online collectors may insist on payment by money transfer.
- The collector does not want to provide a receipt or the receipt does not have the charity's details on it.

### If you want to donate

- Charities must be licensed. Check the charity register on the Consumer and Business Services (CBS) website to see if it is a genuine charity.
- Check the charity's credentials and find out if donations will be tax-deductible by visiting the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)
- Donate to organisations with a strong record in providing aid. Be wary of giving money to an unfamiliar charity.
- If contacted by a telemarketer you are not obliged to commit to a donation immediately.
- Approach charity organisations directly to make a donation. Ring the fundraiser's hotline if you want to donate over the phone. Visit the charity's official website using the correct website address.
- Never use a phone number, website address or email link given by a person who first approached you.
- Only hand over money to someone wearing proper identification and always ask for a receipt. If they are not wearing identification, ask to see it.
- Make sure collection tins or containers are sealed and clearly labelled with the fundraiser's logo.
- Never give out your personal, credit card or online account details unless you initiated contact and it is a trusted source.
- Monitor your credit card statements and if any donation discrepancies appear, contact the charity immediately.
- If the charity is well known but you are suspicious of a collector in your area, contact the charity and ask if they are aware of the collector.

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## Report fake fundraisers

Protect others and help make sure donations go to legitimate charities and causes. Promptly report fake fundraisers:

- on the SCAMwatch website at [www.scamwatch.gov.au](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au) ; or
- to the South Australian Police (SAPOL) for charities within South Australia on 131 444.

## Collection of donations in South Australia

To collect donations in South Australia for charitable purposes you must be licensed appropriately under the *Collections for Charitable Purposes Act 1939*.

Visit [www.cbs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au) for more information and to see if a charity is licensed in South Australia.

## Need more help?

Visit the CBS website [www.cbs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cbs.sa.gov.au)  
Email [CBSEnquiries@agd.sa.gov.au](mailto:CBSEnquiries@agd.sa.gov.au)  
Tel **131 882**