

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Hurricane Survivors Advised To Hire Legitimate Contractors

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With millions of dollars in recovery funds flowing to Virgin Islanders whose homes were damaged or destroyed during the hurricanes, territorial and federal emergency management officials are offering some sound advice: hire legitimate contractors for your repair or reconstruction jobs.

The Virgin Islands Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommend that survivors who have received FEMA grants to repair or rebuild homes make sure their contractor is experienced and trustworthy, and that all appropriate building permits are obtained before any work begins.

The Virgin Islands requires that home builders obtain business licenses and that some specialty builders, including electricians and plumbers, be certified. Homeowners may obtain additional information through the Virgin Islands Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs at <http://dlca.vi.gov>.

“Checking a contractor’s credentials before signing any paperwork will start your rebuilding project off on the right foot,” said Federal Coordinating Officer William Vogel of FEMA. “We want federal recovery funds to help get hurricane survivors back into safe and well-constructed homes.”

Other tips for avoiding fly-by-night builders include:

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