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Wise giving in the wake of Hurricane Harvey

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It's heartbreaking to see people lose their lives, homes, and businesses to the ongoing flooding in Texas. But it's despicable when scammers exploit such tragedies to appeal to your sense of generosity.

If you're looking for a way to give, the FTC urges you to be cautious of potential charity scams. Do some research to ensure that your donation will go to a reputable organization that will use the money as promised.

Consider these tips when asked to give:

- **Donate to charities you know and trust** with a proven track record with dealing with disasters.
- **Be alert for charities that seem to have sprung up overnight in connection with current events.** Check out the charity with the Better Business Bureau's (BBB) Wise Giving Alliance, Charity Navigator, Charity Watch, or GuideStar.
- **Designate the disaster** so you can ensure your funds are going to disaster relief, rather than a general fund.
- **Never click on links or open attachments in e-mails unless you know who sent it.** You could unknowingly install malware on your computer.
- **Don't assume that charity messages posted on social media are legitimate.** Research the organization yourself.
- **When texting to donate, confirm the number with the source before you donate.** The charge will show up on your mobile phone bill, but donations are not immediate.
- **Find out if the charity or fundraiser must be registered in your state** by contacting the National Association of State Charity Officials. If they should be registered, but they're not, consider donating through another charity.



To learn more, go to [Charity Scams](#). For tips to help you prepare for, deal with, and recover from a severe weather event, visit [Dealing with Weather Emergencies](#).

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