

October 2020 – Technology Security Tip

Scammers “Prey” (not pray) on Our Kindness during Disasters

Wildfires raging out West. The hurricane season. Civil unrest. And all of this happening during a global pandemic that has claimed its own devastating share of deaths and cost people their livelihoods. In response to these events, the season of giving is starting even before the usual holidays, since we all just want to help where and as we can.

But shameless scammers want to help themselves to your money. And they’re competing with legitimate charities, taking advantage of your generosity. So, as you open your heart and wallet to help people and causes, be sure to consider these tips for safe giving:

- Never let anyone rush you into donating. Pressuring you to act right away is something that scammers do.
- Don’t assume the charity appeals you see [online or on social media](#) are legitimate, even if someone you know sends them to you. Even if a group sounds legit, know that some scammers use names that sound like real charities, only they are not. So:
- Before you donate, [research the name](#) of the organization or cause. Search their name online, plus the words “scam,” “fraud,” or “complaint.”
- Find out if the charity or fundraiser is registered in your state. Check with your [state’s charity regulator](#) to find out. If the charity isn’t registered, consider donating elsewhere.

Courtesy of Lisa Lake, www.consumer.ftc.gov