



PAT QUINN
Governor

ANDREW BORON
Director

NEWS

Illinois Department of Insurance

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Monday, March 12, 2012

Illinois Department of Insurance to Offer Counseling to Storm Victims in Harrisburg

DOI to help Southern Illinois Homeowners with Insurance Claims

SPRINGFIELD—March 12, 2012. To assist Harrisburg residents recovering from a deadly tornado that struck southern Illinois on Feb 29, the Illinois Department of Insurance (DOI) is offering free, one-on-one counseling services to affected individuals with the insurance claims process. DOI staff will provide information on how to properly document storm damage, whether to make temporary repairs, what a consumer's homeowner policy covers, and what to expect during the claims process. The counseling session will take place on:

**(TODAY) Monday, March 12th
12 p.m. - 6 p.m.**

Harris-Pruett Community Building
107 E. Church
Harrisburg

The Department is also alerting property owners of individuals selling services or benefits that sound or appear "too good to be true," and is offering this advice to consumers:

- Property owners should always contact the Department of Insurance before entering into an insurance contract or formal agreement that raises questions or suspicion.
- Illinois law requires public adjusters (or insurance adjusters who are not employed by a particular insurance company) to be licensed with the Department of Insurance. Contact the Department at its toll-free number (866) 445-5364 to verify that a public adjuster is licensed and in good standing before signing any contract.
- Public adjusters are independent operators; they are not public employees, do not work on behalf of the State of Illinois or the Department of Insurance.
- Consumers may find that the Department's trained staff can provide assistance with insurance claims and questions for free. Contact the Department of Insurance to learn more.

Governor Pat Quinn issued a state disaster proclamation after a tornado devastated parts of southern Illinois on Feb 29. The Governor directed the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to activate the

State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Springfield to coordinate state assistance to affected communities. State assistance with cleanup and recovery efforts is continuing. Following a damage assessment conducted by IEMA, FEMA and U.S. Small Business Administration personnel, Gov. Quinn on March 7 requested federal assistance to help people and businesses who suffered losses from the tornado.

Useful information on insurance coverage and on how to handle the insurance claims process following a natural disaster can also be found in the Department's consumer fact sheet entitled "When Disaster Strikes – What to do After an Insured Homeowners Loss." The fact sheet is available through the Department's website, www.insurance.illinois.gov, or by clicking [here](#). A list of agencies and organizations who can help ease the burdens caused by a major disaster is also on the Department's website or by clicking [here](#).

More information

The Department's mission is to protect consumers by providing assistance and information, by efficiently regulating the insurance industry's market behavior and financial solvency, and by fostering a competitive insurance marketplace. The Department assists consumers with all insurance complaints, including health, auto, life, and homeowner. Consumers in need of information or assistance should visit the Department's Web site at insurance.illinois.gov or call our toll-free hotline at (866) 445-5364.

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