

Monthly Columns

by Attorney General Jack Conway



April 2010

Once again, Mother Nature has tested our resolve. At least four people are dead and families and businesses across Kentucky are beginning the difficult task of cleaning up after thunderstorms last weekend caused widespread flooding and damage. My thoughts and prayers are with those who lost loved ones and as a result of these storms.

On May 3, 2010, Gov. Steve Beshear declared a state of emergency in response to the storms. The emergency declaration triggers several consumer protection measures that will be in place for 30 days. It also empowers me to investigate and prosecute, where appropriate, those who sell gasoline, generators, building supplies, chain saws, hotel rooms and other necessary goods and services at exorbitant prices in a time of disaster.

I have put Kentucky businesses on notice that price-gouging will not be tolerated in Kentucky. I will not allow families that have been hurt by this storm to be victimized a second time by unscrupulous individuals who prey on their vulnerability. In fact, I launched a price-gouging investigation in the wake of Hurricane Ike and the subsequent windstorm that swept across Kentucky in September 2009 that resulted in recoveries of more than \$100,000 involving eight retail gasoline stations in seven Kentucky counties.

I encourage anyone with specific information regarding possible price-gouging to email pricecomplaints@ag.ky.gov or call my Consumer Protection Hotline at 888-432-9257.

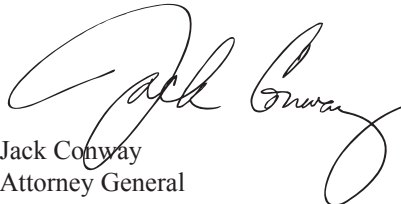
I also urge Kentuckians who have suffered storm damage to follow these important tips:

- Never pay in advance for repair work or materials. Scam artists often take advance payments from consumers and never return to complete the work.
- Use local, reputable contractors for repairs, if possible.

- Ask if the contractor is licensed, bonded and insured.
- Check unknown companies out with the Better Business Bureau.
- Demand a written contract.

If your vehicle has suffered water damage, please keep the following tips in mind:

- Check your oil. A reading of an oil level that is too high may indicate water in the engine.
- If you have a car loan, notify your lender of the damage.
- Act quickly to determine the vehicle's current NADA average prior to the flood damage. You will need to know this when dealing with an insurance provider or lender.



Jack Conway
Attorney General

Combating Election Fraud

With the May 18th primary election just two weeks away, I want Kentucky voters to know that my office will do everything in its power to ensure an honest and fair election. My office has been working closely with the Secretary of State and U.S. Attorney's office to prepare for the upcoming election.

I'll have investigators from my office on the ground patrolling precincts and polling places across the Commonwealth looking for election law violations. We will investigate any such violations and take the appropriate enforcement action.

But we also need your help. We need the eyes and ears of Kentucky voters to make sure election laws are being upheld. If you notice any suspicious activity or voting irregularities on Election Day, please call my Election Fraud Hotline at 800-328-VOTE (8683).

Working together, I know we can ensure that Kentuckians across the Commonwealth will have their voices heard when they cast their ballots on May 18th.