

# LouisianaRebuilds.Info/LSU Contractor Fraud Survey

Welcome!

LouisianaRebuilds.Info/LSU Contractor Fraud Survey

Contractor fraud has become a major challenge in our community's recovery from disaster. LouisianaRebuilds.Info is partnering with the LSU Sociology Department in Baton Rouge to survey how widespread contractor fraud is and more importantly, what we can do to stop it.

Whether or not you've been a victim of contractor fraud, please take this important survey. Getting information from all residents will give us better insight on how to fight this issue.

The survey takes an average of 5 minutes to complete. Your answers are completely confidential, and you are free to skip any question or to end the survey at any point. We will report results only in aggregate, percentaged form. We will not release data with personally identifying information. The results will be used only for community recovery planning and scholarly research.

If you have questions about this survey, you may contact the LSU Sociology Department at 126 Stubbs Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, 225-578-1645. If you have questions about respondents' rights, you may contact Dr. Robert C. Mathews, Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at LSU, at 203 B-1 David Boyd Hall, tel. 225-578-8692.

With your help – whether or not you have experienced contractor fraud – we can work together to help fix this devastating problem.

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## Place of Residence

Please tell us the location of the storm-damaged house being renovated.

1. On what street is the house located, and what is the nearest cross street?

Street the house is on

Nearest cross street

2. In what ZIP Code is the house?

ZIP/Postal Code:

## Damage & Repair

3. How much physical damage did the storm-damaged house suffer as a result of hurricane Katrina and the subsequent flooding? [If apartment or condo: the unit being renovated.]

- None or almost none
- Some physical damage
- Major physical damage
- Complete destruction, unsalvageable

4. How complete is the rebuilding/repair of this house now?

- Done (or never had storm damage)
- Almost done
- Halfway done
- Just started work
- No work started

5. What parts of the rebuilding/repair are already completed? (check all that apply)

- Demolition
- Interior Gutting
- Mold Remediation
- Roof
- Dry Wall
- Ceilings
- Floors
- Fixtures
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Elevation
- None

Other (please describe)

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6. Will you have enough money, from all sources, to cover damage to this house and its contents?

	All or almost all of the damage	Most of the damage	About half of the damage	Less than half of the damage	Very little or none of the damage	Doesn't Apply (Don't own, etc.)
I already have or received enough to repair or replace ...	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
I believe I will have or receive enough to repair or replace ...	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

7. Of the money you already have for repair or replacement, about how much came from each of the following sources?

	Over 75%	About 50-75%	About 25-50%	Some Money, but less than 25%	None	Doesn't Apply (Don't own, etc.)
My own money	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Insurance	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
The Road Home Program	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Other Government Programs or Agencies of any kind	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Your Church or Congregation	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Any other group or agency affiliated with a religious denomination	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Any other group or agency not affiliated with a religious denomination	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Family or Relatives	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Friends	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Other	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

## Experience of Fraud

8. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

Most people can be trusted

Can't be too careful

9. How about Building Contractors, Construction Workers?

How much do you trust Building Contractors, Construction Workers?

Trust them a lot

Trust them some

Trust them only a little

Trust them not at all

Don't Know

10. Do you know anybody who has been victimized by contractor fraud?

Yes, one case

Yes, more than one case

No

11. [If yes] Has their situation been resolved?

Yes

No

Some resolved, Some not resolved

Don't Know

12. Have you yourself been victimized by contractor fraud?

yes

no

## About the Fraud

13. How did the contractor defraud you? Check any that apply.

- Took payment but did not perform services
- Stole materials
- Performed shoddy work
- Used poor quality materials
- Started work, but did not complete it
- Another way (please explain)

14. About how much money did you lose?

- \$1-\$10,000
- \$10,001-30,000
- \$30,001-\$50,000
- \$50,001-\$100,000
- \$100,001-\$150,000
- \$150,001-\$300,000
- More than \$300,000

15. Was a lien put on your home?

- Yes
- No

16. [If there was a lien] Was it a fraudulent/unfair lien (e.g., an attempt to make you pay for shoddy/incomplete work; a result of the contractor not paying subcontractor, etc...)?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure if it was fraudulent

17. [If there was a lien] Has it been removed yet?

- Yes
- No

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18. Has being victimized by contractor fraud prevented you from completing your rebuilding/renovations?

I am unable to finish rebuilding/renovating my home

I was temporarily stalled but was able to finish

I was able to finish without being stalled, despite the fraud

## Reporting Fraud

19. Did you report the contractor to the authorities?

Yes

No

20. [If yes] Who exactly did you report it to? Check any that apply.

Louisiana state Contractor Licensing Board

Attorney General's Office

Local parish authority

Better Business Bureau

Other [please explain]

21. What if any action was taken by the authorities? Check all that apply.

They were fined

They went to jail

They were made to return my monies

They were made to finish the renovation work on my house

No action was taken

The case is still pending

Other (please specify)

22. Did you take any legal action against the contractor?

Yes

No



## The Contractor

23. What were your primary reasons for hiring this contractor? Check any that apply.

- Because his/her price was in line with what I could afford
- She/he was someone I know/ referred by someone I know
- They seemed trustworthy
- I felt pressured and I really needed the work done so I signed
- I checked their license and references
- I saw other renovation work they performed which was well done
- Other [please explain]

24. What steps did you take in deciding how to hire a contractor? Check any that apply.

- Used the guidelines outlined by the Licensing Board
- Asked for the advice of a friend or family member
- Allowed the contractor to tell me what I needed to do
- Other [please explain]

25. Was the contractor from Louisiana?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

26. Was the contractor licensed in Louisiana?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

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27. [If yes] Did you confirm the license by:

- Calling the LA state contractor licensing board
- Checking on the LA state contractor licensing board's website
- He/she showed me the license
- I didn't confirm the license existed
- Other [please explain]

28. Was the contractor insured?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

29. Did you get a written contract?

- Yes
- No

## Resolution and Going Forward

30. Did you recoup your lost money?

Yes

No

31. Has your situation been resolved?

Yes

No

32. If so, how was it resolved?

I got additional funds to rebuild

The contractor gave me my money back

The contractor is now finishing the job

I found and hired another contractor who is doing a good job

An organization is helping me rebuild with volunteer labor

I'm acting as the contractor, hiring subcontractors, and overseeing the work myself.

Other: please explain

33. What type of help, if any, do you need or want moving forward?

## About You

34. Are you...

Male

Female

35. In what year were you born?  
[RECORD FULL YEAR (e.g., 1967)]

36. Do you consider yourself to be:

White

African-American / Black

Asian

American Indian

Other (please explain)

37. Are you currently married, living with a partner, separated, divorced, widowed, or have you never been married?

Married

Living with partner

Separated

Divorced

Widowed

Single, never married

38. Do you have children? How many?

None

One

Two

Three

Four or more

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39. What is the highest grade of schooling that you have completed?

- 8th Grade or less
- Some high school
- High School Diploma
- Vocational/Technical school
- Some College
- College degree
- Some graduate school
- Graduate degree

40. What was the total income that you and all other members of your household earned before taxes last year, from all sources.

- Under \$25,000
- \$25,000 to \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$75,000
- \$75,000 to \$100,000
- \$100,000 to \$200,000
- More than \$200,000

41. Optional: If you would let LouisianaRebuilds.Info or the LSU Sociology Department contact you again for a follow-up survey, please give us contact information. We will ONLY use this contact information for a follow-up survey and will not reveal it to anyone else.

Phone number(s):

Phone number(s):

Email address(es):

Email address(es):

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Thank you!

This concludes the survey. Thank you for participating and giving so generously of your time.