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Call Citizens First following Hurricane Matthew

TALLAHASSEE, FL – Citizens Property Insurance Corporation is urging its policyholders to protect themselves from assignment of benefit scams and abuse by calling Citizens first to report losses following Hurricane Matthew.

Citizens representatives are available 24/7 throughout the weekend to handle claims calls at 1.866.411.2742. More information can be found on Citizens website <https://www.citizensfla.com/claims>

“Citizens is ready to assist our policyholders as they begin their recovery from Hurricane Matthew and get their lives back in order,” said Barry Gilway, Citizens President, CEO and Executive Director. “Our claims representatives are ready to help. All you have to do is call.”

Unfortunately, unscrupulous contractors and repair companies thrive in the frenzied days following any storm. Policyholders must be wary of unlicensed contractors or deals that sound too good to be true.

To protect themselves, policyholders who have experienced a loss from the storm should call Citizens first to ensure they stay in control of their claim. Further, Citizens advises policyholders not to sign anything, including an assignment of benefit, before consulting with Citizens or their insurance agent.

Here’s why. You may be signing away your rights and be left with unfinished repairs or forced to pay a contractor for repairs not covered by your policy. The policy may also place a limit on emergency repairs until Citizens is notified to inspect damage before permanent repairs are made.

Chris Gardner, Chairman, Orange County • Gary Aubuchon, Lee County
Bette Brown, Monroe County • Juan Cocuy, Palm Beach County • Don Glisson, Jr., St. Johns County
Jim Henderson, Seminole County • James Holton, Pinellas County • Freddie Schinz, Okaloosa County
Barry Gilway, President/CEO and Executive Director

Policyholders are most likely to be offered an assignment of benefit (AOB) while making emergency repairs or when companies come to the door soliciting business. Policyholders may be told repairs cannot be completed until they have signed an AOB contract, which allows the company to submit the claim and deal directly with Citizens.

More information on the [potential pitfalls of assignments of benefits](https://www.citizensfla.com/storms) is available on Citizens website. More information also can be found on Citizens website <https://www.citizensfla.com/storms>

To report suspected insurance fraud, Citizens policyholders can call Citizens Special Investigations Unit toll free at 1.855.748.9596. or submit a report online. Customers can also contact the Department of Financial Services, Division of Consumer Services Insurance Consumer Helpline immediately at 1-877-693-5236. Your concerns will be promptly referred to insurance fraud investigators.

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In 2002, the Florida Legislature created Citizens Property Insurance Corporation (Citizens), a not-for-profit alternative insurer, whose public purpose is to provide insurance to, and serve the needs of, property owners who cannot find coverage in the private insurance market.

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