

Week 3 – National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Beware of charity scams in the wake of disaster

Thieves routinely try to take advantage of people with big hearts who want to help, so to make sure your donation gets to the victims who need it most, here's some tips for making safe donations online:

- Don't assume messages posted on social media are legitimate. Do your research by checking the name of the charity with watchdog groups such as [CharityNavigator.org](https://www.charitynavigator.org), [Charitywatch.org](https://www.charitywatch.org) or [GuideStar.org](https://www.guidestar.org).
- Pay close attention to names that closely resemble better-known, reputable organizations. Scammers sometimes use similar names to reputable charities to trick people into donating.
- Many groups will now ask you to text your donation. You should always confirm the number with the source before adding the charge to your cellphone bill.

If you see any red flags during your research, or if you're not sure about how a charity will use your donation, consider giving to a different charity. There are many worthy organizations who will use your donation wisely.