

**Sept. 10, 2011**

### **Beware of Charity Scams Following Flood Disaster**

**Harrisburg** – Pennsylvania residents should be wary of charity scams in the wake of widespread flooding in the central and eastern portions of the state.

“Pennsylvanians are generous and want to help their fellow citizens who are suffering as a result of flooding caused by the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee,” said Secretary of the Commonwealth Carol Aichele, whose department oversees charities in Pennsylvania. “However, there are steps you should take to make sure you are giving to a legitimate organization and not a scam artist.”

Aichele offered several recommendations on how people can check to make sure they are donating to a legitimate charity.

- Be wary of high pressure tactics and door-to-door solicitation
- Ask for details about the charity, and how much of the charities’ funds go to their charitable purpose, how much goes for operating expenses, and how much goes for fundraising expenses
- Write checks directly to the charity; do not give cash donations
- Check to see if the organization is registered with the Bureau of Charitable Organizations by calling 1-800-732-0999, or online at [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us), then clicking on “Charities”.

“By taking time to make sure you are donating to a legitimate organization, you can be certain your money will truly help your fellow Pennsylvanians recover from this disaster