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OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

VIDEO: PG Hotline Expanded for TS Laura



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today expanded Florida's Price Gouging Hotline to receive reports of extreme price increases on essential commodities needed to prepare for the approaching storm. The expansion comes as Governor Ron DeSantis declares a state of emergency for Tropical Storm Laura in the following counties: Bay, Broward, Calhoun, Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, DeSoto, Dixie, Escambia, Franklin, Glades, Gulf, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Hillsborough, Jackson, Jefferson, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Taylor, Wakulla, Walton and Washington. Florida's price gouging laws for this event only apply within the area of the declared state of emergency and only for commodities and services essential to preparing for or recovering from the storm event.

The price gouging laws remain in effect statewide under the emergency declaration in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March for commodities that relate specifically to the health crisis. Other storm-related state of emergencies continue as a result of Hurricane Michael for 14 counties and Hurricane Isaias for 19 counties on the east coast of Florida.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Floridians should prepare now, with enough food, water and other essential items needed in case this storm strikes their community. With the declared state of emergency, I am expanding my Price Gouging Hotline to receive reports of extreme price increases on the essential items Floridians need to be prepared. If you see potential price gouging, please report it immediately so we can ensure Floridians are able to prepare without

the added stress of excessive prices."

During a storm-related declared state of emergency, state law prohibits excessive increases in the price of essential commodities, such as food, water, hotel rooms, ice, gasoline, lumber and equipment, needed as a direct result of the event. Anyone who suspects price gouging should report it to the Florida Attorney General's Office by using the NO SCAM app, visiting MyFloridaLegal.com or by calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM. The Attorney General's NO SCAM app can be downloaded for free through Apple and Android stores by searching NO SCAM.

Preparedness tips can be found by downloading Attorney General Moody's 2020 Hurricane Preparedness guide here.

For tips on reporting price gouging, click here.

For more information on price gouging, please click here.

For more information about price gouging associated with the statewide COVID-19 emergency declaration issued in March, click here.

Violators of the price gouging statute are subject to civil penalties of $1,000 per violation and up to a total of $25,000 for multiple violations committed in a single 24-hour period. In addition to the civil penalties for price gouging, state law criminalizes the sale of goods and services to the public without possession of a business tax receipt.