



MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
MANATŪ KAIHOKOHOKO

## Scam Alert

**Earthquake appeals - make sure you donate to a legitimate organisation.**



Sadly, natural disasters are an opportunity for scammers to take advantage of the good will and generosity of New Zealanders. Charity scams appeared after the earthquake in Haiti and the tsunami in the South Pacific.

Although we haven't - as yet - received any reports of charity scams since the Canterbury earthquake, we are warning consumers to take some simple steps when choosing to donate to a charity:

Protect yourself from charity scams

- If you are contacted by a charity you have never heard of before, do some research before saying 'yes'.
- If you are approached face-to-face by someone representing a charity, look for official identification. Even if they have ID, check for signs that the ID may be faked.
- Do not be pressured or intimidated or made to feel guilty. Genuine charities would regard such tactics as bad for their reputations.
- Ask for full details of the charity, such as name, address, phone number and charity registration details. If the collector is reluctant to give out this information, find another way to contribute.
- Be cautious about 'soundalikes'. Those being organisations that play on legitimate charity names, such as "Oxfan".

The Charities Commission advises that it's best to give to large, well-known charities and suggest if anyone ever has a doubt about donating to a charity, they can check it out on the [Charities Register](#), or call 0508 CHARITIES.

The [Stuff.co.nz website has list of charities](#) to donate to.

If you do come across suspicious charity requests, please let us know by [filing a scam report](#).

[See here for more scam alerts](#).