



Attorney General Steve Marshall Warns Against Price Gouging as Alabama Placed Under State of Emergency in Advance of Hurricane Michael

(MONTGOMERY) Attorney General Steve Marshall warned those who would seek to illegally profit from bad weather that Alabama's price gouging law has been activated in advance of the arrival of Hurricane Michael this week.

Alabama's price gouging law comes into effect when the Governor declares a State of Emergency and it prohibits the 'unconscionable pricing' of items for sale or rent.

Effective at 3:00 p.m., October 8, Governor Ivey [declared](#) a State of Emergency "in anticipation of wide-spread power outages, wind damage and debris produced by high winds and heavy rain associated with Hurricane Michael." Hurricane Michael is expected to affect southeast Alabama by Wednesday morning and tropical storm warnings are already in effect in the Wiregrass region of south Alabama.

"Alabamians should be cautious of those who would seek to prey upon them through crimes such as price gouging and home repair fraud," said Attorney General Marshall.

Although what constitutes an unconscionable price is not specifically set forth in state law, a price that is 25 percent or more above the average price charged in the same area within the last 30 days-- unless the increase can be attributed to a reasonable cost-- is a prima facie case of unconscionable pricing. The penalty is a fine of up to \$1,000 per violation, and those determined to have willfully and continuously violated this law may be prohibited from doing business in Alabama.

Consumers and officials can report concerns of alleged fraud or illegal price gouging to the Attorney General's Consumer Interest Division by calling toll-free **1-800-392-5658**, visiting the Attorney General's website to file a complaint

<https://ago.alabama.gov/ConsumerComplaint>, or by writing to 501 Washington Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama, 36130.

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