

## **State of Louisiana OCD-DRU tells homeowners to start using CTA for answers.**



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This comes after months of fighting between homeowners and their point of contact CTA at the IEM offices for recovery information. Many CTAs were told by management not to communicate with homeowners while others simply ignored the homeowner.

### **Solution 2 Homeowners**

State of Louisiana OCD-DRU Interim Director for Homeowner Assistance Spring Garcia has asked that we use our CTAs once again for communications about our rebuilds, repairs and reconstruction.

This announcement comes on the heels of fighting with IEM Inc. contracted call center managers and program managers about responsiveness and accuracy of relaying program policies.

Being told in emails "You can drop from the program at anytime." is not assisting flood victims with their recovery.

Answering elevation questions 85 days after they are posted to Restore.LA.Gov and sent to CTAs and their manager is irresponsible or a sign of incompetence in their roll.

The communications to Solution 2 homeowners is at this time more important than ever. With only 37% of all Solution 2 Homeowners complete you have to start looking at the real reasons some homeowners are still at the same stage they were 90 days after the flood. If accurate information is not relayed to the homeowner in a timely manner there can be no successful recovery.

It took 85 days to receive an answer from one CTA and his manager hired by IEM and working under the name of P.W.R. LLC. It took 85 days to answer a question posted Sept. 25, 2018 and it was the same Solution 2 manager that threatened to drop a homeowner because they were over their 30 day limit to select a contractor.

Imagine suffering a flood, waiting years for word, accepting a grant and then receiving an email from management that they are going to drop you from the program because you have not signed a contract with a licensed contractor.

We are very concerned about recovery and even more so when state officials and subcontractors place rules that are not documented in the homeowners guide and follow up with "you can drop at anytime."

I would like to ask that you email me any CTA issue you are having. I would like to follow up with the IEM Program Manager on how the Program on IEM's side is correcting the issues you might be having.

I will if required follow up with Spring Garcia from the state of Louisiana OCD-DRU Homeowners Assistance Program on policy or procedure issues. You know she will not discuss specific case issues.

PM and Emails only.

### **CTA response Timelines:**

We have experienced and documented the following:

- Email response to acknowledge your email 3 hours.
- Email answers to policy questions when policy is published 6 hours.
- Email answers to unpublished spoken policy 1 business day.
- Email answers to future policy changes 30 days.
- Email answers to reconstruction elevation time was 85 days with IEM subcontractor. Same question to state OCD-DRU answered in minutes.

From page 15 of the [Restore Louisiana Homeowners Program Manual version 5.1 published Dec. 7, 2018](#)  
Definitions: ([Program Policy Information can be found here.](#))

**Construction Technical Advisors (CTA):** Program staff members who explain to Solution 2 applicants the Scope of Work eligible under the applicant's award, the applicable Program requirements, and the obligations of the applicant and the applicant's homebuilding contractor. Construction Technical Advisors do not provide any construction services or any advice related to construction methods. No warranties or representations regarding construction or repair of the damaged property are provided by such advisors.

It is very important to work by Email or any form of written document so you have a physical record of just what was advised by your CTA.

It is also very important that any document your CTA asks for you upload to your eGrants Documents folder. You should never be working with email attachments when it comes to contractors licensing, insurance, elevation certificates, building permits, foundation design and home design. You must upload these documents to your eGrants and tell your CTA you have so they will start using your most recent documents and not email attachments that can be lost or deleted.

If you have a complaint about your CTA this is the order we have found may help resolve the issue. Do not call on the phone, everything needs to be document in writing so emails / letters only.

1. CTA unresponsive more than 3 business days.
  - a. Email Charles Voelker [Charles.Voelker@Restore-LA.org](mailto:Charles.Voelker@Restore-LA.org)
  - b. Allow Charles Voelker 3 business days, if no reply / answer or the answer is not to your liking then;
2. Email Ted Lemcke IEM program manager, [Ted.Lemcke@Restore-LA.org](mailto:Ted.Lemcke@Restore-LA.org)
  - a. Allow 3 business days.

- b. If no response or you are not satisfied with the response you can then bring the issue up with the Louisiana Homeowners Assistance Director.
3. Email Interim Director Spring Garcia, [Spring.Garcia@la.gov](mailto:Spring.Garcia@la.gov)

We always like having people discuss the issues in our Facebook Group or by email before escalating up the management ladder.

Sometimes we have the same questions answered from past managers, CTA's and State Directors that are still valid.

These are only suggestions regarding how to resolve communication issues with your CTA's.

(Emergent Methods LLC, you are welcome to copy for your next press release.)

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