



Contact: Cassandra Anderson
(518) 432-4227 or (518) 312-3315

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SPEED THE HOMEOWNERS CLAIMS PROCESS BY KEEPING GOOD RECORDS AND UTILIZING YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY AND AGENT RESOURCES, SAYS NYIA

ALBANY, N.Y., January 15, 2009— Each year insurance companies pay more than \$1.5 billion in homeowners insurance claims to New Yorkers whose homes have been damaged by fire and natural disasters or burglarized.

The vast majority of claims are settled quickly and fairly with the expertise of a company adjuster.

To speed the homeowners insurance claims settlement process, the New York Insurance Association (NYIA) suggests that you:

- **Report any burglary or theft to the police.**
Get a copy of the police report, as well as the officer's name and contact information.
- **Notify your insurance agent as soon as possible.**
Find out if you're covered for the loss and ask questions to make sure you understand the claims process.
- **Document your loss.**
Prepare a list of damaged items. Save receipts from any additional expenses you may have incurred to make temporary repairs or if you have to find other accommodations while your home is being rebuilt.
- **Fill out all claim forms correctly and promptly.**
Most insurance companies place time limits on filing claims, so it is important to get the process going as soon as possible.
- **Keep good records.**
Make copies of all claim forms and receipts before sending them to your insurance company. Get the name and phone number of insurance company personnel and anyone else you may have dealt with regarding your loss such as contractors or roofers.

Throughout the claims process, keep your agent informed so that he or she can be ready to help you keep all aspects of your claim in motion.

Keep in mind that your insurance company provides an adjuster at no charge to you. These company-supplied adjusters are required to abide by state regulations on claims handling and are experienced in the claims process.

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Consumers should be aware that a public adjuster may contact someone submitting a claim. The public adjusters have no relationship with your insurance company and charge a fee for their services.

Under New York law, a public adjuster may not charge a fee more than 12.5% of the recovery amount and must get a signed compensation agreement from you in which the amount of compensation is clearly stated. Such agreement may be cancelled up to midnight of the third business day after the date on which you have signed the compensation agreement. In addition, public adjusters may not solicit your business between the hours of 6 p.m. and 8 a.m.

If you decide to use a public adjuster, first check his or her qualifications by calling the New York State Insurance Department. Ask your agent, a lawyer or friends and associates for the name of a professional adjuster they can recommend. Avoid individuals who go from door-to-door after a major disaster, unless you are sure they are qualified.

The New York Insurance Association (NYIA[®]) is a state trade association that has represented the property and casualty insurance industry for over 125 years. For more information on NYIA, visit www.nyia.org.