



FEMA

News Release

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Toll-Free Application Number Available For Those Affected By November Flooding

SEATTLE – A toll-free application telephone number and on-line registration are now operational for residents in Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, King, Lewis, Pierce, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Thurston, and Wahkiakum counties who suffered property damage or losses from the 2-11 November 2006 floods.

In response to a request from Governor Gregoire, President Bush signed a major disaster declaration designating these counties eligible for federal aid to help meet the recovery needs of stricken residents and business owners.

State and Federal officials encourage those affected by the disaster to apply for assistance immediately by going online to www.fema.gov or calling this toll-free number, 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (local time) Monday through Saturday until further notice. Those with speech or hearing impairments may call TTY 1-800-462-7585.

"Your phone call or online registration is your application for both state and federal assistance available under the disaster declaration," said Libby Turner, federal coordinating officer for the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Kurt Hardin, state coordinating officer, Washington Emergency Management Division, added, "Registration is the most important first step an individual can take to receive federal aid. Even if an individual has checked on insurance coverage for property losses, federal aid may help pay for deductibles and unmet needs."

The declaration makes residents of these counties eligible for a wide range of programs such as funding for temporary disaster housing assistance, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest disaster loans for individuals and business owners to repair or replace damaged property, replacement grants for serious disaster-related needs and expenses not covered by insurance or other assistance programs, and disaster unemployment assistance.

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Toll Free Application Number//Add One

When applying for help, be sure to have the following information available:

- Your current phone number;
- Your address at the time of the disaster and the address where you are now staying;
- Your Social Security number, if available;
- A general list of damages and losses you suffered;
- If insured, the name of your company or agent and your policy number;
- General financial information;
- Bank account coding if you wish to speed up your assistance with direct deposit.

"Don't prejudge your eligibility, even if you don't have all the information necessary or it was lost in the flooding," Turner said. "It's important that all residents get the assistance available to them as quickly as possible."

FEMA disaster assistance covers basic needs only and will not normally compensate you for your entire loss. If you have insurance, the government may help pay for basic needs not covered under your insurance policy. Residents should contact their insurance agent first, then if they have unmet needs they should call FEMA to apply.

Some disaster aid does not have to be paid back, while other help may come in the form of loans. The FEMA representative will explain the details to you when you call.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following national incidents. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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