



Disaster News

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It Only Takes a Phone Call to Apply for FEMA Help

LACEY, WASH.- Applying for federal disaster assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by phone or on the internet only takes between 15 and 30 minutes. Washington residents or businesses that had losses or damages from the Nov. 2-11 flooding can register for assistance by calling **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**, TTY 1-800-462-7585 for the speech or hearing impaired, or registering on line at www.fema.gov.

Once applicants register and receive a nine-digit case identification number, they will get information through the mail letting them know what types of assistance they are eligible to receive. Most applicants will receive a loan application from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Homeowners and renters must first register with FEMA. If FEMA refers them to SBA, they should go to a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) and meet with an SBA representative as soon as possible. They do not need to wait to receive the SBA application in the mail before meeting with SBA at the DRC.

At the DRC, an SBA representative will explain the SBA low-interest disaster loan program, SBA application process, answer any questions, provide assistance in completing the disaster loan application and accept completed disaster loan applications for processing.

Business owners should register with FEMA. However, they may go to any DRC without a FEMA referral to receive a disaster loan application from SBA and meet with an SBA representative. Business owners can also download a disaster loan application for their business at www.sba.gov.

For the location and hours of operation of your nearest DRC, call the SBA Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955. Anyone not able to go to a DRC should call this number for SBA information and assistance.

Federal and state program specialists are available at the DRCs to provide help and information to anyone who has already applied for FEMA disaster assistance.

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“If you have questions about the FEMA information you received in the mail, go to a DRC and meet one-on-one with experts from FEMA, SBA, state and voluntary agencies, said Libby Turner, federal coordinating officer.

“The DRC specialists are there to assist applicants in checking their case status after they have applied for assistance,” said Kurt Hardin, state coordinating officer. “They’ll be glad to help you.”

FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident, initiates mitigation activities and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA works closely with State and local emergency managers, law enforcement personnel, firefighters, and other first responders. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

SBA is the federal government’s primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, economic status or retaliation. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, you should call FEMA toll-free at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or contact your State Office of Equal Rights. If suspicious of any abuse of FEMA programs, please contact the fraud hotline at 1-800-323-8603.

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