FEMA Region IV Office
Atlanta, Georgia

News Release

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FEMA REGISTRATION PROCESS IN THREE EASY-STEPS

ATLANTA – Survivors of the recent storms and tornadoes in Alabama who suffered damage should apply for disaster assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency – even if you have insurance or aren't sure you are eligible.

Federal disaster assistance will not duplicate benefits, but may provide for uncovered losses. Grants may be available to help pay for rental assistance and emergency home repairs. Reimbursement for other serious disaster-related expenses may include medical, dental, funeral or burial costs.

Also, homeowners, renters, business owners and nonprofit organizations may be eligible for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to aid recovery from losses not covered by insurance, grants or other sources. No one is obligated to take out a loan, but the application must be filled out to receive other types of assistance.

Following are the three basic steps to receiving disaster assistance:

Step One: Registration

Register by phone at **800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 800-462-7585** for those with hearing or speech impairments. Specialists are standing by at the toll-free numbers seven days a week, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. local time, until further notice. Help in other languages is available. Or you can register online at **www.DisasterAssistance.gov.** You can also apply through a web-enabled mobile device or smartphone by visiting **m.fema.gov** and following the link to "apply online for federal assistance."

- If you have insurance, contact your agent before registering with FEMA.
- When calling FEMA, you will need: your Social Security number, your current mailing address, the address of the damaged property, a brief description of the damages and any insurance information, including the policy number and the name of your agent, and a phone number where you can be reached.

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- Fill out and return your SBA low-interest disaster loan application if you receive one. **Returning the application does not obligate you to accept an SBA loan, but the application must be filled out in order to be considered for other types of disaster assistance.**

Step Two: Inspections

After you register, a FEMA-contracted housing inspector will call you to set up an appointment to inspect your property. There is no charge for this service, but it is a necessary step to determine damages.

Make sure your home or mailbox number is easily visible from the road. As part of the inspection process, you must provide proof of ownership or occupancy:

- Homeowners may show a tax bill, deed, mortgage payment receipt or insurance policy with the property's address.
- Renters may show a lease, rent payment receipt, utility bill or other document confirming the home was their primary residence at the time of the disaster.
- Homeowners and renters must also present a valid driver's license or other photo ID.

Step Three: Keep in Touch

Among the top five reasons applicants fail to receive federal assistance grants is FEMA's inability to contact them after they apply. FEMA tries to reach applicants numerous times before a decision on an application is made. It is vital that you inform FEMA of any change in telephone number and/or mailing address. This can be done by simply calling the FEMA Helpline (see below) or by visiting the disaster assistance website.

For More Information or Questions

For any assistance along the way – such as with help filling out the applications, and general questions or progress reports – call the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-FEMA (3362),** or **TTY 800-462-7585**, and select the language option you require. If you would like to speak with someone one-on-one, visit a disaster recovery center. For a list of centers in your area, go to http://go.usa.gov/CDc.

Receiving a FEMA Grant

FEMA will issue funds if you are found eligible for a grant under the Individuals and Households Program. If you have provided banking information to FEMA, the funds will be deposited directly into your account. This option can often speed up the process of receiving assistance.

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If you do receive a check, deposit it as soon as possible. You must use the money for the disaster-related assistance for which it is intended. You will receive a letter outlining how the funds are to be spent.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

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.

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For more information on Alabama's disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov or *http://www.ema.alabama.gov/.*
For the joint Facebook page, go to www.facebook.com/AlabamaEMA. To receive Twitter updates: http://twitter.com/AlabamaEMA or www.twitter.com/femaregion4.