



GEMA



FEMA

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FEMA/State News Desk:
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Disaster News

APPLICANTS: KEEP IN TOUCH WITH FEMA

ATLANTA – Federal and state officials overseeing Georgia’s disaster recovery from the onslaught of mid-March severe storms and tornadoes urge all registered applicants to stay in touch throughout the recovery process.

Officials with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) say this is especially important as disaster-related insurance claims are settled and contact information changes.

By choosing the FEMA Helpline option at **800-621-FEMA (3362)**, **TTY 800-462-7585**, or online at www.fema.gov, applicants are able to update any change of address or phone number, reschedule inspection appointments, notify FEMA about insurance settlements, initiate appeals or ask any disaster-related questions. A broad range of multilingual recovery specialists are available at the Helpline.

Helpline hours are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, until further notice.

Recovery officials say staying in touch includes the prompt return of all required forms and requests for information. If an applicant is referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the loan application has to be completed and returned before some types of federal aid options can be considered.

Filling out an SBA application does not guarantee that an applicant will be approved for a loan, nor does it mean they must accept a loan if they are approved. However, if a home loan application is declined, their case will be referred back to FEMA’s grant programs.

FEMA disaster assistance covers only basic needs and will not normally compensate applicants for the entire loss. For applicants with insurance, available state-FEMA disaster assistance may help pay for basic needs not covered under an insurance policy.

Residents living in one of the seven declared Georgia counties who sustained damage or loss from the mid-March storms are still eligible to register for assistance by selecting the registration option at FEMA toll-free numbers or at the website. Registration for assistance ends at the close of business, Monday, May 19, 2008.

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All residents registered for assistance with FEMA are urged to update their mailing address with the U.S. Postal Service by calling 800-275-8777 or visiting www.usps.gov. Change-of-address forms also are available at any post office.

Residents should keep their contact information current with the Social Security Administration and any other government agency they routinely do business with or that may impact their recovery.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

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.

SBA's disaster loans are the primary form of federal assistance for non-farm, private sector disaster losses. Disaster loans from SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and nonprofit organizations fund repair and replacement of disaster damaged real and personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For information about SBA programs, applicants may call 800-659-2955 or online at www.sba.gov.

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For more information on Georgia's disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov or www.gema.ga.gov or www.ready.ga.gov/ or www.georgia911.org or www.afcema.com