



**FEMA**

# News Release

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## ***FEMA AUTHORIZES FUNDS TO HELP WA STATE FIGHT UNION VALLEY FIRE***

**SEATTLE**—The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today authorized the use of federal funds to help Washington State fight the Union Valley Fire burning in Chelan County.

FEMA Acting Regional Administrator Dennis Hunsinger said the state’s request for federal fire management assistance was approved after it was confirmed that the fire was within ½ mile of the communities of Union Valley and Manson, threatening approximately 250 homes. The fire, which was sparked by lightning shortly before 9:00 p.m. 28 July 2009, had consumed more than 1,000 acres at the time of the request and caused the evacuation of 150 homes.

“This declaration is the first step towards enabling the state and local governments to apply for financial help,” said Hunsinger. “We are committed to getting our communities the funds they need to extinguish dangerous fires that threaten lives and property.” Hunsinger encouraged all Chelan County residents to monitor conditions carefully and heed safety instruction issued by local officials.

The authorization makes FEMA funding available to pay 75 percent of the state’s eligible firefighting costs under an approved grant for managing, mitigating and controlling designated fires.

Federal fire management assistance is provided through the President’s Disaster Relief Fund and made available by FEMA to assist in fighting fires that threaten to cause a major disaster. Eligible state firefighting costs covered by the aid must first meet a minimum threshold for costs before assistance is provided. Eligible costs covered by the aid can include expenses for field camps; equipment use, repair and replacement; tools, materials and supplies; and mobilization and demobilization activities.

*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.*

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