



GEMA



FEMA

News Release

October 30, 2009
GA-1858-NR-059
GEMA/FEMA News Desk:
678-728-7531

GEORGIA DISASTER AID TOPS \$75 MILLION, 40 DAYS AFTER THE FLOOD

ATLANTA – Forty days after the historic rains and devastating flooding of mid-September, more than \$75 million in federal assistance has been approved to help survivors get their lives back in order.

Since President Obama's major disaster declaration on Sept. 24, almost \$49.5 million Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) disaster assistance grants and more than \$25.8 million in low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) have been approved to aid in recovery of the 17 counties declared for individual assistance.

One day after the declaration, the first disaster assistance payments were disbursed by FEMA to help Georgia families.

More than 25,000 people have applied for assistance and more than 8,600 visited Disaster Recovery Centers.

Officials are working hard to make sure everyone who may be eligible for assistance has registered with FEMA before the Nov. 23 deadline.

"There are all sorts of reasons people may not have registered," said Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) Director Charley English, who is the state coordinating officer. "But registration for assistance is the first step to recover from the storms, and we want to make sure everyone who had damage is registered."

While the state/FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers have closed, people can register for assistance either by going online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling **800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 800-462-7585**. The toll-free numbers are staffed seven days a week, 7 a.m. until 10 p.m. until further notice. Help is available in all languages.

FEMA representatives remain in all the SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Centers, many of which are in the same locations as former Disaster Recovery Centers.

(MORE)

GEORGIA DISASTER AID TOPS \$75 MILLION – Page 2

“People should register for FEMA assistance even if they have insurance,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Gracia Szczech. “Sometimes insurance does not meet all needs, and it is possible FEMA assistance can help, and remember, the registration deadline is Nov. 23.”

Szczech also stressed the importance of staying in touch with the FEMA Helpline after registration so FEMA has all of a person’s or family’s current contact information.

“It is always a good idea to have your FEMA registration number when you call the Helpline because this speeds the process,” she said.

The 17 counties under the disaster declaration for Individual Assistance are Bartow, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, Heard, Newton, Paulding, Rockdale, Stephens and Walker.

In addition to assistance for individuals, 21 Georgia counties are eligible for FEMA’s Public Assistance program that reimburses local and state agencies and certain non-profit agencies for the expenses and damages occurring during the response and recovery phase of the disaster.

Those counties are Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Cobb, Crawford, Dawson, DeKalb, Dooly, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, Heard, Houston, Newton, Paulding, Peach, Rockdale, Stephens, Taylor and Walker.

Of an estimated 150,000 cubic yards of debris left by the storms and flooding, nearly 50,000 cubic yards have been cleared.

Public Assistance grants are awarded to help pay for emergency protective measures, such as police overtime, debris clearance to open vital roads and rights-of-way, removal of threats to public safety, and permanent repairs to roads, public buildings, utilities and parks.

FEMA hazard mitigation specialists have begun an aggressive outreach program, opening information booths at local building supply stores. More than 16,000 people have visited the booths for information about rebuilding their homes or building back safer.

To date, the SBA has approved 711 low-interest disaster loans for homes and businesses. Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. Businesses of any size and private non-profit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets.

The SBA Disaster Loan Outreach Center in Paulding County at the Paulding County Administration Bldg, 240 Constitution Blvd., Dallas will close at the end of the business day of Friday, Oct. 30. The SBA also encourages homeowners, renters, businesses and non-profit organizations who received applications to return their completed applications prior to the **Nov. 23** deadline.

(MORE)

GEORGIA DISASTER AID TOPS \$75 MILLION – Page 3

FEMA-contracted housing inspectors have completed more than 22,370 of 22,629 requests to view reported housing damage.

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.

###

For more information on Georgia's disaster recovery, visit www.fema.gov or www.gema.ga.gov or www.ready.ga.gov/ or <http://twitter.com/GeorgiaEMA>