



GEMA



FEMA

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GEMA/FEMA News Desk:
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News Release

DISASTER GRANTS AND LOANS TO GEORGIANS TOP \$52 MILLION

ATLANTA – Georgia households affected by storms and flooding across 17 Georgia counties have received more than \$52 million in disaster grants and low-interest loan approvals since the major disaster declaration September 24, said officials with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Nearly \$44.3 million in FEMA disaster assistance grants and almost \$8.5 million in low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration have been approved to aid recovery.

The first disaster assistance payments following the Georgia flooding were disbursed by FEMA September 25 – the day after the disaster declaration.

One measure of an effective response is how quickly money gets into the hands of those with disaster-related losses. That requires aggressive outreach to encourage applications, fast inspections, quick determination of eligibility, speedy delivery of money, and a fair and simple way to resolve issues with those initially determined ineligible for assistance.

Inspections – FEMA has completed nearly 19,000 inspections – more than 96 percent of the inspections requested. At the peak of the disaster response, more than 190 inspectors were in the field and three weeks later nearly 50 remain on the job. The average turnaround time from FEMA registration to completed inspection is three days.

Eligibility – Applicants found ineligible are encouraged to call the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 800-462-7585**. They can also visit one of three Disaster Recovery Centers still operated by state and federal officials.

Delivery of aid – Most applicants sign up for electronic deposit of funds. Those funds are deposited within 24 hours of approval.

Resolving issues of eligibility – People initially denied aid may simply need to provide more information. They can find out the status of their application or how to resolve any problems or appeal a decision by using the FEMA Helpline option at **800-621-FEMA (3362)**, or by visiting a Disaster Recovery Center. Often the problems are as simple as making sure only one person has applied from a household, and has registered only once, so that registrations are not duplicated.

(MORE)

Recovery assistance by the numbers (through October 14):

Almost **\$44.3 million** has been approved to help disaster-affected Georgians with temporary housing, home repairs and other needs through GEMA and FEMA disaster grant programs.

More than **22,000** households and businesses in the 17 designated counties have registered with FEMA.

More than **7,000** people visited a state-federal Disaster Recovery Center to talk one on one with recovery specialists.

Almost **\$8.5 million** in loans to homeowners, renters, non-profit organizations and businesses of all sizes have been approved by the U.S. Small Business Administration.

FEMA Community Relations field specialists are visiting neighborhoods, identifying special needs, talking with Georgians at their homes and at community meetings in affected counties. Teams have visited more than **7,300** homes and talked with more than **800** businesses, churches, schools and community organizations.

More than **35,000** pamphlets, booklets and other publications that provide information on how to reduce the risk of future flood losses have been distributed by FEMA Mitigation Outreach specialists.

More than **6,200** Georgians have talked with FEMA Mitigation specialists, who provide a range of information on techniques that can be used in repairing, rebuilding and building homes and structures. More than **4,200** of those consultations took place at selected home improvement retailers; the remainder took place at Disaster Recovery Centers.

Disaster Recovery Centers remain open in the following locations from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday:

- **Cobb County.** The Threadmill, Suite 151, 5000 Austell/Powder Springs Road, Austell, GA 30106
- **Douglas County.** Heritage Baptist Church, 8800 Rose Ave., Douglasville, GA 30134
- **Gwinnett County.** Mountain Park Depot, 5050 Five Forks Trickum Road, Lilburn, GA 30047

Federal Coordinating Officer Gracia Szczech reminded individuals they can still register with FEMA 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.

Szczech also urged homeowners, renters and businesses of all sizes to return completed Small Business Administration disaster loan applications. The low-interest loans are a major source of money for repairs and replacement of flood-damaged real estate and personal property.

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.

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