



Disaster News

February 9, 2005

DR-1577-CA, NR-03

Contacts:

OES – Greg Renick, 626-431-3648

FEMA – News Desk, 626-431-3091

SBA – Rick Jenkins, 626-431-3091

LOCAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS TO OPEN IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

PASADENA, Calif.—The Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) announced that two Local Assistance Centers (LACs) will open in Los Angeles County on Thursday, February 10, 2005, to serve victims who suffered damages during the severe storms of December 27, 2004 – January 11, 2005.

Disaster victims should register for assistance first by calling **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or by logging onto www.fema.gov for online registration. The TTY number is **1-800-462-7585** for those who are speech- or hearing-impaired.

The centers will provide people with an opportunity to meet face-to-face with recovery specialists. The new LAC locations:

Los Angeles County

Castaic Regional Sports Complex
31230 Castaic Road
Castaic, Calif.
Open 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

North Hollywood Recreation Center
11430 Chandler Blvd.
North Hollywood, Calif.
Open 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., February 10 – 16 only

Representatives of state, federal, and voluntary agencies, as well as loan officers from the U.S. Small Business Administration, will be on hand to answer questions and provide recovery information. Written materials about various assistance programs are also available to individuals and business owners.

OES coordinates overall state agency response to major disasters in support of local government. The office is responsible for ensuring California’s readiness to respond to and recover from natural, manmade and war-caused emergencies and for assisting local governments in their emergency preparedness, response, mitigation and recovery efforts.

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SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available to any individual without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, economic status, or disability. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against in receiving disaster assistance, you may contact one of FEMA's Equal Rights Officers (EROS) at 1-800-525-0321, or contact your State Office of Equal Right.