



FEMA

Disaster News

May 9, 2005

DR-1577-CA, NR-37

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Only One Week Left to Call and Apply for Disaster Assistance

PASADENA, Calif. – Only one week remains for individuals and business owners in the eight California counties designated for individual assistance to call and apply for state and federal aid to replace losses from the severe storms, flooding, debris flows and mudslides that occurred Dec. 27, 2004 through Jan. 11, 2005.

The deadline to call and apply for disaster assistance is **Monday, May 16, 2005**. The eligible counties are Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura.

Individuals and business owners in the eligible counties who sustained losses but still have not applied for assistance should do so by calling the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) toll-free application number, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**. There is also a special number for those with hearing or speech impairment, **TTY 1-800-462-7585**. Both numbers are operational Monday through Friday only, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. Pacific Time.

“This is our final effort to reach out to any disaster victims who still haven’t applied,” David Fukutomi, FEMA’s federal coordinating officer, said.

Even if you have insurance, you may still be eligible for disaster assistance for under-insured losses. However, in order to complete an application, FEMA will need the resident’s insurance settlement information to avoid any duplication of benefits.

“We don’t want anyone to miss out on the assistance they are entitled to,” said Henry Renteria, director, California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. “If you suffered damages as a result of the severe storms, flooding, debris flows and mudslides, please call and apply before the deadline.”

People who have **already applied** may call the FEMA Helpline at the same numbers, 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or TTY 1-800-462-7585), even after the deadline, to check on the status of their application and get additional information.

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.

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 Rights.