



## News Release

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## FEMA disaster aid registration deadline tomorrow

### *Deadline to register for flood disaster assistance is Feb. 7*

OLYMPIA - Officials with the Washington Emergency Management Division and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) remind Washingtonians that Feb. 7 is the last day that calls or on-line applications will be accepted for the Individual Assistance Program. The deadline is 60 days from the date when President Bush issued the major disaster declaration on Dec. 8, 2007.

"Many of our neighbors are working to recover from these storms and I would like to thank officials from FEMA for their response to my request for federal aid," said Gov. Chris Gregoire. "I know this help cannot bring lives back to the way they were, but it will bring much needed help."

Individuals may register for disaster aid by calling FEMA's toll-free number, 800-621-FEMA, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. or TTY 800-462-7585. They also may register online at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

Residents in Clallam, Grays Harbor, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Snohomish, Thurston and Wahkiakum counties are eligible to apply for the federal disaster aid. More than 10,000 Washington residents have registered with FEMA for disaster assistance, and more than \$37 million in disaster grants and low-interest loans have been approved for eligible Washington disaster survivors.

"Federal and state disaster aid workers will continue to process assistance applications after tomorrow's deadline," Gregoire said. "But individuals must be in the FEMA system to have their cases processed."

Housing Assistance Grant awards will be made by FEMA. These cover rental payments for temporary housing for those whose homes are unlivable. Awards will also be made for home repairs and replacement of essential household items not covered by insurance to make the damaged dwelling safe, sanitary and functional.

The state also will continue to make awards for the Other Needs Assistance grant program, which is available to qualified individuals and families to meet serious, disaster-related needs and expenses for which assistance from other federal, state or voluntary agency disaster assistance programs, is unavailable or inadequate. These needs typically fall into the categories of medical, dental and funeral expenses, as well as personal property, transportation and other necessary expenses or serious needs resulting from the disaster.

Loan applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for disaster-related losses to real and personal property also must be returned by Feb. 7.

When the Disaster Recovery Centers close after Feb. 7, the SBA will open Disaster Loan Outreach Centers (DLOCs) in Chehalis and Aberdeen to continue assisting disaster victims with the SBA loan process. The period the DLOC remains open is normally determined by the level of activity.

The application period to apply for disaster unemployment benefits had expired in late January for nine of the 10 counties affected by the storm disaster. The federal Department of Labor has agreed to extend the application deadline to February 11 to give people more opportunity to apply for benefits. The 10 counties that have been approved for disaster unemployment benefits are Clallam, Grays Harbor, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific,

Snohomish, Thurston and Wahkiakum.

The governor asked the Legislature for up to \$78 million to pay for state government's response to the storm, which included everything from housing to help for businesses to flood control. For example, the Department of Social and Health Services approved nearly 17,000 applications for food stamps. The Department of General Administration delivered tons of food, baskets, infant formula and tarps.

#### Assistance just a toll-free call away

Several toll-free lines have been established to provide disaster assistance for applicants in the 10 designated counties. Each of these numbers is available during normal business hours, Monday through Friday.

- FEMA Helpline (800-621-3362 or TTY 800-462-7585) - If you wish to check on the status of your claim, update your insurance settlement, or have questions about the disaster assistance you received.
- FEMA/State Housing Resource Helpline (866-233-7643) - If your housing needs have changed and you need assistance identifying a temporary rental property in your area.
- State Other Needs Assistance Hotline (800-688-3469) - If you have received Other Needs Assistance (for personal property, medical, dental, funeral and transportation) and have questions about that program or have unmet needs.
- Small Business Administration Helpline (800-659-2955 or TTY 800-877-8339) - If individuals or business owners want to check on the status of their loan applications, update information, or have questions about SBA's disaster loan program.

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