



FEMA

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News Release

Federal Disaster Assistance Is for Arkansas Renters, Too

NORTH LITTLE ROCK – Renters in Arkansas counties whose homes and property were damaged by the severe spring storms may be eligible for federal disaster assistance.

“Heavy rain, flooding and tornado winds do not discriminate between homeowners and renters,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Nancy M. Casper. “We’re here to help everyone who is eligible for assistance, and that includes renters.”

Renters who were displaced from their homes by the storms may be eligible for FEMA grants to help them pay rent for temporary housing. These rental grants are for a 30-day period, subject to review until renters' previous homes are again livable or they find another home.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) offers affordable disaster loans to help Arkansas renters repair or replace disaster-damaged personal property, including automobiles. Loan rates are as low as 1.688 percent; terms can be as long as 30 years and survivors may be eligible for up to \$40,000, depending on their losses.

Both renters and homeowners may also be eligible for Other Needs Assistance (ONA), which helps survivors with uninsured or underinsured necessary expenses and serious needs caused by the disaster.

Eligibility for ONA grants is determined by completing and returning the SBA application. There is no requirement to take out a loan.

Other Needs Assistance can be used for:

- Disaster-related medical and dental expenses, as well as assistive devices such as wheelchairs, canes, communications boards and related equipment, and prescriptions;
- Replacement or repair of necessary personal property lost or damaged in the disaster, such as room furnishings or appliances, and tools and equipment required by the self-employed for their jobs;
- Primary vehicles, approved second vehicles and modified vehicles damaged by the disaster; and
- Disaster-related funeral and burial expenses.

Residents of Crawford, Garland, Howard, Jefferson, Little River, Miller, Perry, Sebastian, and Sevier counties affected by the severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding during the period of May 7 to June 15, 2015 may be eligible for disaster assistance and are encouraged to register for assistance with FEMA by the Aug. 25, 2015 deadline.

Individuals and business owners who sustained losses can apply for assistance by registering online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or by web enabled mobile device at m.fema.gov. Disaster assistance applicants, who have a speech disability or hearing loss and use TTY, should call 1-800-462-7585 directly; for those who use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS), call 1-800-621-3362. Multilingual operators are available.

The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice. Multilingual operators are available.

After registering with FEMA for assistance, survivors should either visit a Disaster Recovery Center to apply for their SBA loan, or request a loan application when they receive a recorded, automatic telephone call from SBA.

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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.

The SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations, homeowners and renters fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling (800) 659-2955, emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or visiting SBA's website at www.sba.gov/disaster. Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call (800) 877-8339.