

**TXGDEM****FEMA**

## E-News Update

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This E-News update includes information on federal and state resources available to help Texas businesses and employees recover from Hurricane Ike. We welcome your comments, questions, good stories and suggested topics. See the final section for information on how to contact us.

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### SITUATIONAL UPDATE

Disaster assistance efforts as of **Monday, Nov. 3:**

- **More than 715,000** registrations have been received for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual Assistance.
- **More than \$337 million** has been approved for disaster assistance under FEMA's Individuals and Households Program. This includes **more than \$274 million** in Housing Assistance and **more than \$63 million** in Other Needs Assistance.
- The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved **more than \$177 million** in low-interest disaster loans.
- **More than 363,500** FEMA home inspections have been completed.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, local governments and approved contractors have cleared **more than 16.6 million cubic yards** of debris from disaster-affected counties.
- The Army Corps of Engineers has installed **more than 27,000** temporary roofs through Operation Blue Roof.
- Texans seeking rental housing can search **more than 32,000** Texas rental properties through FEMA's Housing Portal, available online at <https://asd.fema.gov/inter/hportal/home.htm>.
- FEMA has provided temporary manufactured housing for **more than 400 applicants** for those living in communities where other housing options are not feasible.

- The **100<sup>th</sup>** Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) opened this week. Nearly 95,000 visits have been made to the centers. There are **41** FEMA/State DRCs open in affected counties, offering face-to-face assistance. A list of current locations can be found at [http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/dr1791\\_drc\\_list.htm](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/dr1791_drc_list.htm).
- **More than 150** Community Relations field specialists — including speakers of Spanish, Vietnamese, Thai, Laotian and Cambodian — are canvassing areas hit by the hurricane, distributing information about FEMA programs and reaching out to community groups.
- **More than \$79 million** has been obligated to Texas local governments and private nonprofits for Public Assistance, and **more than 1,000** requests for Public Assistance projects have been submitted.
- **The Transitional Sheltering Assistance Program** has been extended for eligible applicants until Jan. 15, 2009.

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## USE YOUR FEMA FUNDS WISELY AND WELL

FEMA has distributed more than \$268 million in housing assistance funds to help Texans affected by Hurricane Ike. Officials from the Texas Governor's Division of Emergency Management (TXGDEM) and FEMA caution recipients to use their funds wisely and well.

Distributed via check or direct deposit, housing funds are intended to help residents meet basic disaster-related needs and begin rebuilding their lives. If an applicant spends the payment on anything other than the purpose for which it is intended, no additional assistance may be granted if the need arises in the future.

Disaster assistance may include grants to help pay for minimal temporary repairs on damaged homes, temporary housing, or other serious disaster-related expenses not covered by insurance or other sources. A letter explaining the payment's purpose will arrive within a day or two of the check or direct deposit payment.

Grant recipients are urged to keep receipts of their disaster spending for three years to demonstrate how the money was used to meet disaster-related needs. They are required to sign a declaration and a release certifying all funds will be spent on the expenses for which they are intended. If a recipient receives an insurance settlement to cover the same expenses, he or she must reimburse FEMA. Random audits may be done to confirm funds were spent properly.

Applicants should also update their address and phone number by calling FEMA at **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585**. Otherwise, they may miss important correspondence or telephone calls regarding their payments or applications for assistance. Certain government checks cannot be forwarded.

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## FEMA TEAMS OFFER HOME REPAIR ADVICE AT STORES

Teams of FEMA hazard mitigation specialists are visiting Home Depot and Lowe's home improvement centers, answering residents' questions about protecting their homes from future disaster damage. The FEMA representatives explain building techniques that optimize flood and wind resistance, and offer advice on topics such as home elevation, safe rooms, wind straps, flood insurance and other measures to make homes stronger and safer. They also offer publications on similar topics.

The schedule currently is as follows:

<b><u>Galveston County</u></b>	<b><u>Harris County</u></b>	<b><u>Orange County</u></b>
Home Depot	Lowe's	Home Depot
3200 S. Gulf Freeway	1000 Gulfgate Center Mall	603 Strickland Dr.
League City, TX 77573	Houston, TX 77087	Orange, TX 77630
Nov. 4 to Nov. 9	Nov. 4 to Nov. 9	Nov. 3 to Nov. 8
Tues. through Sun.	Tues. through Sun.	Mon. through Sat.
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.	8 a.m. to 6 p.m.	Nov. 3 to Nov. 8

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#### F E M A P R I V A T E S E C T O R O F F I C E

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*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability or economic status. Anyone who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or 1-800-462-7585 for the speech- or hearing-impaired.*