

FEMA, Federal Family Unite to Support Hawaii Wildfire Response, Recovery

Release Date: August 12, 2023

WASHINGTON -- More than a dozen federal agencies and departments are mobilized to assist state, county, nonprofit and private sector partners to help the people of Hawaii with recent devastating wildfires. Personnel from FEMA, federal agencies and voluntary organizations are arriving daily to Hawaii to support active response and initial recovery efforts.

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell is in Hawaii today with **U.S. Fire Administrator** Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell and Administrator Isabella Guzman of the **U.S. Small Business Administration** to meet with Gov. Josh Green and other officials to assess the damage. In addition, hundreds of staff from across the federal family have been deployed or mobilized to assist. Federal assets from FEMA, the **Department of Defense**, the **U.S. Coast Guard**, **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**, **U.S. Department of Health & Human Services**, as well as many others, have been helping responders since the wildfires began.

As of Aug. 12, 2023:

- FEMA has deployed more than 150 FEMA personnel, including search and rescue teams, with more on the way. Today, Disaster Survivor Assistance teams are in Maui to help residents register for assistance and address any critical needs in the affected neighborhoods.
- **Department of Health and Human Services** Secretary Xavier Becerra declared a public health emergency in Hawaii, which allows health care providers and suppliers greater flexibility in meeting emergency health needs of Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries.
- The **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration** activated the national disaster distress hotline. Professional counselors are available for anyone in Hawaii who may need it. They can be reached via call or text at **1-800-985-5990**.
- The **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)** encourages homeowners, renters, businesses and nonprofits to apply for low interest disaster loans.



FEMA

Page 1 of 2

Businesses can apply for up to \$2 million for physical damage or economic injury. During her visit today, SBA Administrator Guzman will visit with local small business owners to discuss resources available to support their recovery.

- The **American Red Cross** has mobilized volunteers who are focused on providing shelter, food and other necessities to survivors who are unable to return home, as well as helping with family reunification efforts. They are also deploying reunification teams in Maui and Oahu.
- The **Salvation Army** is providing thousands of meals to individuals and families at the Maui County Pukalani Shelter.
- The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** has personnel on the ground supporting local officials with the assessment of the damaged infrastructure.
- The **National Guard** has activated 134 troops — including 99 Army National Guard personnel and 35 Air National Guard personnel — to assist in the ongoing local and federal wildfire response efforts.
- Through its response and rescue operations, the **U.S. Coast Guard** has saved 17 lives, with 40 additional survivors located and assisted ashore by U.S. Coast Guard Station Maui.
- The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** is working on pet reunification and large-animal removal.
- The **U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs** is working with Veteran Affairs hospital patients to ensure that they have enough supplies, like oxygen.
- The **U.S. Department of the Interior** is coordinating with FEMA and other federal and local partners to address the tragic loss of the **Lahaina Historic District** and **National Historic Landmark**.

If they can, FEMA encourages Hawaii residents to register for federal assistance by visiting DisasterAssistance.gov, through [the FEMA App](#), or by calling **1-800-621-3362**. Residents who use a relay service, such as video relay or captioned telephone service, can give the FEMA operator the number for that service.

As response and recovery efforts continue, Hawaii residents and tourists should continue to monitor instructions from local authorities.

For more information on the Hawaii wildfires, visit fema.gov.

