

# Hurricane Laura Recovery Efforts Through One Year

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One year has passed since Hurricane Laura made landfall as a powerful Category 4 hurricane in Louisiana with 150 mph winds and over nine feet of storm surge. The devastating storm wrecked homes and buildings, knocking out power to hundreds of thousands and severely destroying the coastline. The storm displaced hundreds of thousands of families with structural damage that will cost billions and take many years to repair.

Recovery was in its beginning stages when, only six weeks later, Hurricane Delta slammed into much of the same land area. Then a winter ice storm in February struck, once again forcing residents from their homes and cutting off all utilities. Finally, in May, disaster-weary residents suffered through yet another strong storm that included tornadoes and flooding. Each of these disasters set back recovery and forced survivors to begin picking up the pieces of their lives again.

Through the difficult year following Hurricane Laura, the State of Louisiana and FEMA have worked together to aid residents as they recover from Hurricane Laura and the added disasters.

Federal assistance for recovery in Louisiana since Hurricane Laura made landfall Aug. 27, 2020, adds up to more than \$1 billion in FEMA Individual Assistance grants, National Flood Insurance Program payments, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) loans and funds obligated to pay for Public Assistance projects.

Federal Assistance for Hurricane Laura as of Aug. 20, 2021

FEMA Individual Assistance:

- More than \$235 million approved.



- More than \$167.5 million approved for housing repair costs, home replacement and rental payments.
- Nearly \$67.7 million approved to replace essential household items and for other critical disaster-related costs.
- More than \$102.8 million provided to FEMA's direct housing program for purchasing housing units, renting housing pads and unit maintenance.
- More than \$41 million obligated for Crisis Counseling, Disaster Case Management, Disaster Legal Services and Disaster Unemployment Assistance.

### FEMA Direct Housing Program

- 44,538 households were approved for housing assistance and 63,777 survivors were approved for other disaster-related costs such as home repair, rental assistance and replacing essential household items.
- 2,400 households have participated in FEMA's Direct Housing program, which provides travel trailers or temporary transportable manufactured housing units on private property or in mobile home parks. At present, 249 households have successfully moved on to more permanent housing by completing basic home repairs or finding a rental property.

### U.S. Small Business Administration

- Approved more than \$608 million in low-interest disaster loans to homeowners, renters and businesses.

National Flood Insurance Program paid an estimated \$48.9 million in claims to 1,237 policyholders.

### FEMA Public Assistance Program

Nearly \$426 million in Public Assistance grants has been obligated for Hurricane Laura-related reimbursements to state and local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations, including:



- More than \$189 million for debris removal 23.8 million cubic yards of debris removed, according to designated county reports from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).
- Nearly \$218 million approved for emergency protective measures and emergency sheltering.
- More than \$12.7 million for permanent repair work.

From August 2020 to August 2021, 11,654 displaced households received hotel lodging through FEMA's Non-congregate Sheltering Program totaling more than \$60 million in assistance for Hurricane Laura.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) installed 12,977 blue roofs, enabling families to live in their homes while making permanent repairs.
- FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs), in coordination with private nonprofits and volunteer agencies, have secured more than \$350,000 in housing assistance and other needs assistance through appeals and working with individuals to help them provide required documentation.
- FEMA deployed staff to support survivors before, during and after Hurricane Laura made landfall. At the height of the response, more than 1,463 federal employees were assisting with response efforts.

### Long-term Recovery Efforts

FEMA's Interagency Recovery Coordination Group (IRC) continues to work with the state and the designated parishes and their communities to help identify recovery strategies and coordinate technical assistance and other resources to meet needs beyond what FEMA, the state and other programs can cover.

Seven long-term recovery groups have been formed across the state to look into unmet needs of survivors in their communities.

As the costs of disasters continue to rise, governments, the private sector and homeowners alike must find ways to reduce hazard risks to their communities. Under the presidential declaration for Hurricane Laura, all areas within the State of



Louisiana are eligible for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). HMGP funding helps communities eliminate or reduce future disaster-related damage. Eligible subrecipients are local and state governments and certain non-profit organizations. Homeowners and businesses must apply for HMGP funds through their local government. The local governments submit applications to the State; the state reviews the applications and forwards them to FEMA for review and approval.

For the latest information on Hurricane Laura, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4559](https://fema.gov/disaster/4559). Follow the FEMA Region 6 Twitter account at [twitter.com/FEMARegion6](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion6).



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