

Federal Disaster Assistance for Oregon Tops \$116 Million

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Salem, Ore. – Three months after the President declared a major federal disaster for Oregon Wildfires, more than \$116 million in state and federal funds have been provided to aid the Oregon wildfire recovery.

As of Dec. 7, FEMA has approved nearly \$31 million in disaster assistance for homeowners and renters.

When combined with low interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration totaling more than \$52 million and an additional \$33 million in salaries, services and goods contracts, more than \$116 million in federal funding has been approved for residents and businesses across Oregon.

“As we’ve seen over the last year, wildfires can be absolutely devastating. Oregon residents affected by this disaster have shown uncommon resilience and determination to recover and move forward,” said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer Dolph Diemont. “The assistance FEMA has delivered will help survivors take those important first steps on their road to recovery, providing them with financial assistance to help them achieve their long-term goals and return to a sense of normalcy.”

While FEMA continues to work hard to provide much needed assistance to survivors and communities affected by this year’s wildfires, they’re not alone, as Oregon Office of Emergency Management Director Andrew Phelps reminds us, recovery is a long-term collaborative effort.

“This year has been beyond difficult for thousands of Oregon residents across the state,” said Phelps. “Through strong partnerships with our federal, state, non-profit and local partners we’ve made significant progress toward our recovery goals, which have taken on special meaning as we enter the winter holidays. Wildfire recovery is a long process, and we are committed to meeting the unique needs of each disaster survivor as our community, and Oregon, rebuilds together.”



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Oregon Recovery Highlights

- 2,917 Oregon residents have been approved for housing and other needs assistance grants totaling nearly \$31 million.
 - Of those, 501 homeowners received the maximum housing assistance grant amount available from FEMA.
 - In addition, more than \$6 million in grants have been approved to help homeowners and renters replace personal property, for medical and dental expenses, moving and storage fees and other serious disaster-related expenses not covered by insurance or other sources.
- FEMA completed damage inspections of 6,764 homes.
- FEMA's direct housing mission continues to match families with housing options as quickly as possible until all eligible families have a temporary place to live. As of Dec. 13, 21 families have been provided temporary housing solutions.
- Through the federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance program, the State of Oregon approved \$246,700 to support 153 survivors.
- Disaster legal services were made available to answer legal questions from wildfire survivors. Survivors can still take advantage of this service online at osbar.org/public/index.html, or call **800-452-7636** or **503-684-3763**.
- FEMA operated six External Outreach Sites serving Jackson, Lane, Marion, Linn, Lincoln, Clackamas and Douglas counties. At these sites, disaster survivor assistance teams served 1,856 visitors, helping residents apply for FEMA grants, appeal FEMA decisions, get updates on their applications, receive referrals and address any remaining needs.
- Since mobilizing on Sept. 24 by FEMA Mission Assignment, 17 EPA field recovery teams, working 12-hour days, seven days a week, have retrieved and removed household hazardous waste from over 2,300 fire-ravaged parcels in eight Oregon counties.
- EPA teams have also stabilized and consolidated ash and debris from more than 230 parcels along Oregon waterways - including five miles of the Bear Creek riparian area in Jackson County - protecting water quality from toxic runoff.
- In close coordination with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, FEMA has provided \$779,545 through the Crisis Counselling Immediate Services Program to provide counseling to wildfire survivors. The Safe+Strong Helpline is available for both children and adults who are



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struggling with stress, anxiety or other disaster-related depression-like symptoms. For help, call **800-923-4357** or visit safestrongoregon.org/mental-emotional-health. This is a free service provided by the Oregon Health Authority and Portland-based nonprofit agency Lines for Life.

- To date, \$410,308 was approved for repairs under FEMA's Public Assistance Program. FEMA Public assistance helps state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and certain types of private nonprofit organizations respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. PA funding helps cover costs for debris removal, life-saving emergency protective measures, and restoring public infrastructure.
- FEMA has received 146 Requests for Public Assistance from local Oregon governments and organizations.
- FEMA has hired 30 local residents in a number of recovery positions. Hiring locally benefits the recovery process allowing local residents, some of whom are disaster survivors themselves, to offer insights into their communities and the challenges facing Oregon residents like themselves.
- All FEMA disaster messaging has been provided in seven languages identified as prevalent in Oregon: Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Somali, and Russian, in addition to English and American Sign Language. Bilingual speakers have been available for public meetings.
- The toll-free disaster assistance helpline, **800-621-3362** is also supported by specialists in those seven languages and additional languages, and live translation services are available to all applicants who call FEMA.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585). Those who use a Relay service such as a videophone, InnoCaption or CapTel should update FEMA with their assigned number for that service. They should be aware phone calls from FEMA may come from an unidentified number. Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish)

Disaster survivors affected by the Oregon wildfires and straight-line winds can also get personalized mitigation advice to repair and rebuild safer and stronger from a FEMA Mitigation Specialist. For information on how to rebuild safer and



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stronger or to inquire as to your new flood risk following a fire near you, email FEMA-R10-MIT@fema.dhs.gov, a FEMA Hazard Mitigation specialist will respond survivor inquiries. When rebuilding check with your local building official and floodplain administrator for guidance.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

