

## **Disaster Assistance Granted for Five Oklahoma Counties**

In the event of the recent severe storms and tornado disasters in Oklahoma, Cleveland, Lincoln, McClain, Oklahoma and Pottawatomie counties have been granted federal disaster assistance through the United States Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The designation ensures federal assistance for housing repairs or temporary housing, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest loans for individuals and businesses to repair or replace damaged property, disaster unemployment assistance, and grants for serious needs and necessary disaster expenses not met by other programs.

The federal aid grants public assistance for state and local governments in the five counties to assist with debris removal and emergency protective measures to include overtime for first responders. The declaration also provides direct federal assistance in the form of bottled water, blankets, meals-ready-to-eat and other bulk supplies. With additional damage assessments underway, other counties could be added to the declaration as well.

To apply for disaster assistance, individuals and business owners may call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or go online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov). To learn more about the FEMA disaster process and disaster aid programs, visit [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

## **Disaster Aid Programs**

Three major categories of disaster aid:

### Individual Assistance

Immediately after the declaration, disaster workers arrive and set up a central field office to coordinate the recovery effort. A toll-free telephone number is published for use by affected residents and business owners in registering for assistance. Disaster Recovery Centers also are opened where disaster victims can meet with program representatives and obtain information about available aid and the recovery process. [Apply for Individual Assistance](#)

### Public Assistance

Public Assistance is aid to state or local governments to pay part of the costs of rebuilding a community's damaged infrastructure. Public Assistance may include debris removal, emergency protective measures and public services, repair of damaged public property, loans needed by communities for essential government functions and grants for public schools. [Learn more about Public Assistance](#)

### Hazard Mitigation

Disaster victims and public entities are encouraged to avoid the life and property risks of future disasters. Examples include the elevation or relocation of chronically flood-damaged homes away from flood hazard areas, retrofitting buildings to make them resistant to earthquakes or strong winds and adoption and enforcement of adequate codes and standards by local, state and federal government.

FEMA helps fund damage mitigation measures when repairing disaster-damaged structures and through the Hazard Mitigation. [Learn more about Hazard Mitigation Assistance](#)