



HSEMD



FEMA

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Disaster News

State-Declared County Disaster Programs Differ from Federal Assistance Programs

DES MOINES, Iowa – The state of Iowa has declared disasters in 49 counties. Four of these counties have also been designated disaster areas under a federal declaration for the May 25 severe storms, tornadoes and flooding. State declarations and federal declarations bring different assistance to counties.

When Iowa Governor Chet Culver issues a proclamation designating a county as a disaster area, it does two things: First it allows state resources to be deployed at no cost to help local responders protect Iowa citizens. Second, it starts a program for low-income Iowans to receive grants up to \$3,319 to help cover storm-caused losses. Applications may be completed by households whose annual income is 130 percent or less of federal poverty guidelines, which is \$27,560 for a family of four.

Residents can find an application form on the Department of Human Services (DHS) Web site at <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us>. Look for the “Storm Help” link for the form and line-by-line instructions on how to fill it out. Additional help is available from any DHS county office or county emergency management office. For more information, call DHS at **1-877-937-3663**.

A current list of state-designated disaster counties can be found on the Iowa Homeland Security Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) Web site at <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org> under the June 2008 flooding link.

This is a reimbursement program, meaning that applicants for either state or federal assistance should provide receipts for qualifying storm-related expenses for making the dwelling safe, sanitary and secure. These state grants may also cover temporary lodging expenses.

Because federal programs offer more assistance, Iowa’s state-only individual assistance programs are not available in counties that receive a federal disaster designation.

Federal Assistance

When the President signs a Federal Disaster Declaration, there are two types of assistance that are available to designated counties through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Federal Public Assistance programs are currently available to repair roads, bridges and other public structures damaged by the May 25 severe storms, tornadoes and flooding in Black Hawk, Buchanan, Butler and Delaware counties.

Federal Individual Assistance programs are also available in Black Hawk, Buchanan and Butler counties. Homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and non-profit organizations whose property has been damaged or destroyed may receive federal assistance for losses not covered by insurance.

To register or get more information, contact FEMA at **800-621-3362** or (TTY) **1-800-462-7585** (for the speech or hearing impaired) between 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. local time seven days a week, or go to the FEMA Web site anytime at <http://www.fema.gov>.

FEMA's Individuals and Households Program may be able to provide assistance to affected individuals and families in the form of rental payments for temporary housing for those whose homes are unlivable, assistance for home repairs and replacement of essential household items not covered by insurance to make damaged dwellings safe, sanitary and functional.

Other Needs Assistance

Other Needs Assistance (ONA) is a federally-funded program that is administered by the state of Iowa. ONA covers disaster-related needs such as medical and dental costs, funeral and burial costs, clothing; household items (room furnishings, appliances); tools (specialized or protective clothing and equipment) required for your job; necessary educational materials (computers, school books, supplies); clean-up items (humidifier, dehumidifier); disaster-damaged vehicles; moving and storage expenses related to the disaster (moving and storing property to avoid additional disaster damage while disaster-related repairs are being made to the home); assistance to replace personal property and help meet medical, dental, funeral, transportation and other serious, necessary disaster-related needs not covered by insurance or other federal, state and charitable aid programs.

More information is available from the ONA Helpline at **1-866-434-4692**, Monday through Friday – 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

A federal disaster declaration also enables Iowa DHS to seek approval from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to offer emergency food stamp benefits. Residents in Black Hawk and Butler counties can apply for benefits until Wednesday, June 18.

People who would not normally qualify for regular food stamps may be eligible at this time because of storm-related expenses. As in a regular food stamp program, benefits depend on household size, income, and resources. A family of four, whose monthly income and available resources were completely offset by expenses related to the disaster, is eligible for up to \$540 in assistance.

Other Programs

While some housing assistance funds are available through FEMA's Individuals and Households Program, most disaster assistance from the Federal government is in the form of loans administered by the U.S. Small Business Administration. An SBA loan application is included in the FEMA registration materials and is a key part of the registration process. While no one is required to take out an SBA loan, a loan denial may open up other assistance to eligible applicants.

Families affected by flooding can also contact the American Red Cross for assistance at 866-438-4636. Iowans with goods or services to donate can contact the Iowa Concern Hotline at 800-447-1985.

FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For information about SBA programs, applicants may call 800-659-2955 (TTY 800-877-8339).

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, nationality, age, disability, English proficiency, economic status, or retaliation. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY Call 800-462-7585.

Editors: More information about the Iowa disaster is available online at www.fema.gov or www.iowahomelandsecurity.org

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As of noon, June 11, 49 counties in Iowa are under the Governor's Disaster Proclamation: Adams, Allamakee, Benton, Black Hawk, Boone, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Carroll, Cerro Gordo, Chickasaw, Clarke, Clayton, Crawford, Dallas, Delaware, Dubuque, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Fremont, Hamilton, Hardin, Harrison, Humboldt, Iowa, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Kossuth, Linn, Marion, Marshall, Mitchell, Montgomery, Page, Polk, Ringgold, Scott, Story, Tama, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Warren, Webster, Winneshiek, Worth, and Wright. Updates to this list can be found on the <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org> under the June 2008 flooding link.