

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FEMA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS FOR MISSISSIPPI DISASTER RECOVERY**

Following is a summary of key federal disaster aid programs that can be made available *as needed and warranted* under President Bush's major disaster declaration issued for Mississippi on April 24, 2003.

**Assistance for Affected Individuals and Families Can Include as Required:**

- Rental payments for temporary housing for those whose homes are unlivable. Initial assistance is provided for up to three months for homeowners and at least one month for renters. Assistance may be extended if requested after the initial period based on a review of individual applicant requirements. (*Source: FEMA funded and administered.*)
- Grants for home repairs and replacement of essential household items not covered by insurance to make damaged dwellings safe, sanitary and functional. (*Source: FEMA funded and administered.*)
- Grants to replace personal property and help meet medical, dental, funeral, transportation and other serious disaster-related needs not covered by insurance or other federal, state and charitable aid programs. (*Source: FEMA funded at 75 percent of total eligible costs.*)
- Unemployment payments up to 26 weeks for workers who temporarily lost jobs because of the disaster and who do not qualify for state benefits, such as self-employed individuals. (*Source: FEMA funded; state administered.*)
- Low-interest loans to cover residential losses not fully compensated by insurance. Loans available up to \$200,000 for primary residence; \$40,000 for personal property, including renter losses. Loans available up to \$1.5 million for business property losses not fully compensated by insurance. (*Source: U.S. Small Business Administration.*)
- Loans up to \$1.5 million for small businesses that have suffered disaster-related cash flow problems and need funds for working capital to recover from the disaster's adverse economic impact. This loan in combination with a property loss loan cannot exceed a total of \$1.5 million. (*Source: U.S. Small Business Administration.*)

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## DISASTER AID PROGRAMS--Add One

- Loans up to \$500,000 for farmers, ranchers and aquaculture operators to cover production and property losses, excluding primary residence. (*Source: Farm Service Agency, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture.*)
- Other relief programs: Crisis counseling for those traumatized by the disaster; income tax assistance for filing casualty losses; advisory assistance for legal, veterans benefits and social security matters.

### **Assistance for the State and Affected Local Governments Can Include as Required:**

- Payment of 75 percent of the eligible costs for repairing or replacing damaged public facilities, such as roads, bridges, utilities, buildings, schools, recreational areas and similar publicly owned property, as well as certain private non-profit organizations engaged in public service activities. (*Source: FEMA funded, state administered.*)
- Payment of 75 percent of the eligible costs for removing debris from public areas and for emergency measures taken to save lives and protect property and public health. (*Source: FEMA funded, state administered.*)
- Payment of 75 percent of the approved costs for hazard mitigation projects undertaken by the state and local governments to prevent or reduce long-term risk to life and property from natural or technological disasters. (*Source: FEMA funded, state administered.*)

### **How to Apply for Assistance:**

- Those in the counties designated for assistance to affected residents and business owners can begin the disaster application process on **Friday, April 25, by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired**, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week until further notice. Applicants registering for aid should be prepared to provide basic information about themselves (name, permanent address, phone number), insurance coverage and any other information to help substantiate losses.
- Application procedures for local governments will be explained at a series of federal/state applicant briefings with locations to be announced in the affected area by recovery officials. Approved public repair projects are paid through the state from funding provided by FEMA and other participating federal agencies.