



February 25, 2005
FEMA-1580-DR-OH-PR010

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Disaster News

HOCKINGPORT RECOVERY CENTER TO CLOSE SATURDAY, BUT HELP STILL AVAILABLE

SBA Loan Assistance Center to Open Monday in Same location

COLUMBUS, OH — The joint federal/state Disaster Recovery Center operating in Hockingport, Ohio will permanently close at noon on Saturday, February 26. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will operate a Disaster Outreach Center in that same location beginning Monday, February 28 on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays, 8 a.m. to noon, until further notice.

At this stage of the recovery process, many businesses and homeowners may be interested in low-interest disaster loans from the SBA to meet their long-term needs. To assist victims in learning more about and applying for such loans, the SBA will continue to operate Disaster Outreach Centers in Hockingport, Marietta and Bellefontaine until further notice.

For more information about SBA's disaster loan program, visit SBA's outreach centers or call the Disaster Area Office at **1-800-659-2955** or **1-800-877-8339** for the hearing-impaired. The filing deadline for physical damage applications is April 18, 2005.

Those affected by the disaster who still have questions about assistance or low-interest disaster loans can call the toll-free application line – **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585** - or visit the SBA Disaster Outreach Center. These lines will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice and may be used to register for federal and state disaster programs. People may also register for assistance at www.fema.gov.

The Ohio EMA coordinates the state's response and recovery from the State of Ohio Emergency Operations Center. One of the primary focuses of the agency is to ensure that Ohio citizens are prepared to respond to and recover from an emergency or disaster and to lead mitigation efforts against the effects of future disasters. During times of disasters, Ohio EMA coordinates activities of responding state agencies and maintains liaison with similar agencies of other states and of the federal government.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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