



FEMA

Disaster News

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FOUR DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS SET TO OPEN AT NOON ON SATURDAY

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Less than one week after President Bush signed a major disaster declaration for Ohio, four joint Disaster Recovery Centers are set to open at noon Saturday, July 8 to help meet the ongoing needs of disaster victims and provide a single location where people are able to talk face-to-face with state and federal recovery specialists.

There are two easy ways to begin the application process **before** visiting one of the centers. Disaster victims may call FEMA's toll-free number, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**, TTY 1-800-462-7585. Both numbers are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week until further notice, and multilingual operators also are available to answer calls. Residents with Internet access may register on the agency's Web site at www.fema.gov where valuable recovery information also is available.

Representatives from local, state and federal agencies will staff the joint centers, operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA). The four centers will be open from noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, July 8; noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday, July 9, and thereafter, the offices will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday until further notice. These are temporary offices and the information and services are available at no cost.

Cuyahoga County

Valley View Village
6848 Hathaway Rd., Valley View

Lucas County

County Emergency Services
Training Center
2127 Jefferson Ave., Toledo

Stark County

Brewster Village Hall/Fire Station
110 E. Main St., Brewster

Huron County

Norwalk High School
350 Shadylane Dr., Norwalk

“Disaster Recovery Centers serve as a one-stop location for individuals to seek further information or for those who have questions regarding the state and federal disaster recovery process,” said Nancy Dragani, Ohio EMA's executive director and state coordinating officer.

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Information provided at these centers is not only useful to those who suffered damages from this summer's storms, but anyone in the area can visit a center and find out what they can do to reduce future damages from severe storms and flooding.

“At this time in the recovery process, people are beginning to think about putting their lives back together,” said Jesse Munoz, FEMA’s federal coordinating officer. “Right now people want information about the status of their applications for assistance or help filling out their disaster loan application.”

Recovery specialists at the centers can talk with disaster victims about:

- The status of the application they have already made by phone or online;
- Referrals for temporary rental assistance resources;
- Assistance completing U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest loan applications for homeowners, renters, business owners and non-profit organizations;
- Examining options for repairing or rebuilding in floodplains;
- Learn cost-effective measures to reduce the impact of future flooding or disaster losses;
- Receive information and detailed plans how to construct a safe room;
- Receive state and federal disaster tax assistance;
- Receive information about the Individuals and Households Program, which includes Housing and Other Needs Assistance;
- Receive additional referral information, handouts and contact numbers for other assistance.

Individuals who are unable to visit the centers and have questions about disaster assistance, rebuilding or preventive measures to avoid future damages are urged to call the same toll-free numbers listed above and select the option for “General Information” or go online to www.fema.gov.

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FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became a part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

The Ohio EMA coordinates state assistance and resources during an emergency and prepares the state for all hazards through planning, training, exercises and funding activities at the state and local levels. This includes providing eligible assistance to individuals and governmental entities recovering from disaster-related damage and costs.

County EMA Directors coordinate the Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery phases of the disaster effort at the local level.