



## Grant County Emergency Management

Steve Braun, Director  
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July 22, 2008

Dear Grant County Resident:

We are sending this letter to residents who reported damage resulting from the flooding events of June 2008. Here is the latest information regarding federal disaster assistance:

**FEMA Application Deadline is August 13.** Anyone who has not yet registered for FEMA assistance needs to do so as soon as possible, by calling the FEMA application line, at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). The deadline to apply for FEMA assistance is August 13. If you believe you are registered but haven't received any contact (ie: a visit from a housing inspector), please contact our office for further guidance. Anyone in Grant County who sustained flood damage, regardless of the severity, is eligible to apply for federal assistance.

**Face-to-Face Flood Victim Assistance is available in Lancaster for a limited time.** When the Disaster Recovery Center at the Youth and Ag building closed, FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration opened an outreach center at the Grant County Law Enforcement Center, 1000 North Adams Street in Lancaster. The center is open 9AM-6PM Monday-Friday, and 10AM-2PM on Saturdays. Homeowners, renters, businesses, and non-profit agencies that were affected by the flooding are encouraged to visit the center to obtain one-on-one assistance regarding your disaster claim and aid that might be available. This center is expected to remain through August 1, and may stay open longer depending on the number of visitors. This center is a great resource if you have any questions about the status of your pending FEMA disaster claim, are interested in an SBA loan, or have general questions regarding any assistance that might be available.

**FEMA Appeals Process:** FEMA may have denied part or all of your claim for federal assistance for a number of reasons. In many cases, homeowners that should be eligible for disaster assistance are denied for technical reasons. It might be as simple as not having a letter from your insurance company stating damages are not covered under your homeowners policy, or not having a good estimate of what the repairs to your home will cost. Whatever the reason may be, often times a denial letter from FEMA does not mean you aren't entitled to disaster assistance; it might just mean that FEMA needs more information to process your claim. Often times, appeal letters are a natural step of the disaster assistance process. Whatever the reason or situation may be, if you feel you should have received more federal assistance than you were awarded, you should contact our office for assistance. Our office is available to help you write an appeal—however, there is only a limited amount of time to do this. You should contact us as soon as possible if you would like assistance in appealing your FEMA claim.

**Fill out SBA loan paperwork even if you don't want a loan.** The application materials you receive by mail after registering with FEMA usually contain an application for a LOAN through the U.S. Small Business Administration. **It is very important that you fill out this loan application completely and return it, even if you are not interested in a loan.** FEMA will look at the information contained in your application to determine whether or not you are eligible for additional grant funds. If you fail to return the application, the disaster aid process might stop completely. You are under no obligation to accept a loan.

As always, if you have any questions regarding the disaster assistance process, feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Steve Braun, Director  
Grant County Emergency Management

Julie G. Loeffelholz, EM Planner/Deputy Director  
Grant County Emergency Management



## FEMA REGISTRATION PROCESS

The first step in the FEMA disaster aid process is to register with FEMA, by calling **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or, for those with speech or hearing impairments, **(TTY) 1-800-462-7585, from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily**. You can also register online at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

- When you register, you are assigned a FEMA application number. If you have questions after you apply, or if the information you have provided changes, call the FEMA Helpline at the above numbers. When calling, have your application number ready.
- After you apply, an inspector will contact you to make an appointment to visit your property to assess disaster damage. There is no fee for the inspection. Although inspectors are contractors, not FEMA employees, they will have FEMA identification. You must be present for your scheduled appointment and provide the inspector with proof of ownership and occupancy.
- Proof of ownership includes items such as your deed, tax records, mortgage payment book or a copy of the damaged dwelling's insurance policy that lists you as the owner. Proof of occupancy includes items such as your driver's license address, any first-class government mail sent to you within the last three months or recent utility bills in your name at that address.
- The inspector will ask you to sign a form authorizing FEMA to verify the information you have provided. Inspectors file your report but will not determine your eligibility.
- Following the inspector's visit, you will receive a letter from FEMA informing you of the decision regarding your request for help. If you are eligible, the letter will be followed by a U.S. Treasury/state check or a transfer of cash to your bank account. The letter will explain how the money can be used. You should use the money given to you as explained in the letter.
- If you are not eligible for help, the letter will explain why and inform you of your right to appeal FEMA's decision. If you feel you were entitled to more assistance than was provided, our office can assist with filing an appeal letter.
- If you are referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for an SBA low-interest disaster loan, you will receive an SBA application. By completing and returning it to the SBA, you keep open the possibility for further federal assistance (including additional grant assistance).