

Many Iowa residents turn to voluntary agencies for disaster assistance. This is not the same as registering with the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for help. Both entities have been exceptionally active following the recent flooding, severe storms and tornadoes in the state.

If you use only voluntary agencies and fail to register with FEMA, *if your disaster is FEMA declared*, you may be cutting yourself off from a major source of recovery funds. FEMA programs are in place because of your tax dollars and there to help you in your time of need.

FEMA, the Iowa Emergency Management Agency and voluntary agencies work closely together when a disaster occurs. However, their missions, programs and funding are completely different.

When a disaster is FEMA declared then anyone affected by the recent flooding, severe storms or tornadoes is urged to register for disaster assistance. There are grants to cover emergency home repairs, rental assistance, and funds to address essential losses not covered by insurance. Low-interest, disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration may be available for homeowners and renters as well as business owners.

Registering takes about 20 minutes and can be done by phone, on the internet and mobile devices. By phone, register between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. daily. Call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**. Register using the internet and mobile devices anytime by logging on to www.disasterassistance.gov or going to m.fema.gov. If you have a speech disability or hearing loss and use a TTY, call **1-800-462-7585** directly; if you use 711 or video Relay Service (VRS), call **1-800-621-3362**.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA disaster loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). If you have a speech disability or hearing loss and use a TTY, call 1-800-462-7585 directly; if you use 711 or video Relay Service (VRS), call 1-800-621-3362.