

FEMA Responds to Severe Winter Weather

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WASHINGTON -- Texas homeowners and renters in 31 [additional counties](#) can now apply for federal disaster assistance with FEMA. The additional counties were approved last night, paving the way for more individuals and families impacted by the winter storms to receive much needed grants that can be used for temporary housing and home repairs. Since the Texas major disaster declaration on Feb. 19, more than \$2.8 million in grants has now been awarded to survivors in Texas.

If you received damages from the Texas storms and have insurance - file a claim. When you apply for FEMA disaster assistance, you will also need to provide your claim information. The Texas Department of Insurance can provide contact information for insurance companies and answer questions about how to file a claim. Call 800-252-3439 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST, Monday through Friday. Survivors can also view insurance company contact information [online](#).

The quickest way to apply for disaster assistance is online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](#). Additional food assistance is also available in Texas through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Recipients may apply for replacement benefits for food lost or destroyed by dialing 2-1-1.

After a disaster, people want to know how to help. Cash donations to the non-profit of your choice is the best way to assist with recovery efforts. To find a list of trusted organizations that can put your generous contributions to the best possible use, visit [National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster](#).

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President Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s [major disaster declaration](#) now provides assistance for disaster survivors in 108 counties. This assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of this storm.

Local resources and volunteers may be able to assist with needs not covered by insurance. Visit [Texas 211](#) for a list of resources searchable by zip code or call 2-1-1.

Survivors who have underinsured or uninsured losses in the counties approved for



FEMA

assistance may apply online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 1-800-621-3362 (TTY: 800-462-7585).

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FEMA has provided personnel, equipment and resources to the state to alleviate impacts from these storms. As of Feb. 22:

- FEMA provided 60 generators, 70,000 gallons of winterized diesel and 70,000 gallons of gasoline to support critical infrastructure over a seven-day period starting Feb. 20
- FEMA has provided over 5.1 million liters of water, more than 126,900 blankets and more than 1.5 million meals.
- Incident Management Assistance Teams are in Austin and Houston supporting response and recovery efforts.
- FEMA has provided 50 ambulances through the National EMS contract.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture approved [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) recipients to apply for replacement benefits for food lost or destroyed due to the severe winter weather by dialing 2-1-1. Recipients need to apply for replacement food benefits for regular SNAP allotments and SNAP emergency allotments that were provided in response to COVID-19.

To assist people in the impacted area in coping with the stress of the winter storms, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration activated the [Disaster Distress Helpline](#). This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support line provides immediate crisis counseling and support. Residents in affected areas may call or text 800-985-5990 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

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The best information on legitimate sources of help in your area will come from local officials. Do not disclose information to any unsolicited telephone calls and e-mails. Do not trust anyone who offers financial help and then asks for money or personal information. The Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention staff never charge for disaster assistance.

Beware of visits, calls or emails from people claiming to be from FEMA asking for your social security number, bank account or other sensitive information. Giving out this type of information can lead to identify theft.



The Texas Department of Insurance is warning people to be aware of potential [contracting scams](#) as they begin making repairs. They are operating a help line to prevent contractor scams: 800-252-3439.

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The severe cold, snow and ice canceled blood drives across the nation. As weather improves, it's vital that eligible individuals give blood to ensure patients have continued access to the treatments they need. Appointments can be made by contacting:

- American Association of Blood Banks: www.aabb.org; 301-907-6977.
- America's Blood Centers: americasblood.org; 202-393-5725.
- American Red Cross: www.redcrossblood.org; 800-RED-CROSS (800-733-2767.)

