

# It's Not Too Early to Begin Disaster Clean Up

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Oklahoma City, OK – State, tribal and federal emergency management officials encourage disaster survivors to begin repairs as soon as they can.

Flood survivors do not need to wait for a visit from the Federal Emergency Management Agency or their insurance company to start cleaning up and make repairs. FEMA inspectors and insurance claims adjusters will be able to verify flood damage even after cleaning has begun.

It's important for survivors to take photographs of damage and keep recovery-related receipts. Insurance companies and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) may need both items, while FEMA may need receipts.

Survivors should check for structural damage before entering their homes. They should also immediately throw away wet contents like bedding, carpeting and furniture because of health issues that may arise with mold.

Emergency management officials encourage survivors to register for FEMA assistance as soon as they can. They only need to register once and only one registration is allowed per household. Once registered, keep in touch with FEMA and update contact information if it changes.



FEMA assistance may help eligible homeowners and renters pay for a temporary place to stay, make repairs or replace certain damaged contents.

Individuals in Canadian, Creek, Logan, Muskogee, Osage, Ottawa, Rogers, Tulsa and Washington and Wagoner counties can register online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov) or by calling toll-free 800-621-3362 from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Multilingual operators are available. Survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY may call 800-462-7585. Survivors who use 711 or Video Relay Service may call 800-621-3362.

FEMA assistance is not taxable, doesn't need to be repaid and doesn't affect other government benefits.

Those who are referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration should complete an application for a low-interest disaster loan. It is not a requirement to accept a loan offer but completing and submitting a disaster loan application is necessary for FEMA to consider survivors for certain forms of disaster assistance.

Businesses, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters are eligible for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration for disaster damaged or destroyed property.

To apply for SBA low-interest disaster loans, Applicants can visit the disaster recovery center for one-on-one assistance or apply online using SBA's secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

In addition, applicants can get more information on SBA disaster assistance by calling SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955, by visiting [www.sba.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster), or by emailing [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call (800) 877-8339.

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The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations, homeowners and renters fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling 800-659-2955, emailing [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov), or visiting SBA's website at [SBA.gov/disaster](http://SBA.gov/disaster) Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call 800-877-8339.



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