



FEMA

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BULLETIN

Week of November 24, 2014

Important Dates and Deadlines:

[Unified Federal Review Applicant Guidance](#)  
(November 28, 2014)

[Assistance to Firefighters Grants](#)  
(December 5, 2014)

[Proposed Public Assistance Policy on Insurance](#)  
(December 8, 2014)

## Native American Heritage Month

In celebration of [Native American Heritage Month](#), FEMA hosted U.S. Department of Agriculture Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Butch Blazer for a panel discussion at Headquarters. Mr. Blazer was joined by Bureau of Indian Affairs Director Michael Black, and FEMA National Tribal Affairs Advisor Milo Booth. The panel discussed the contributions of Native Americans to public service, experiences as Native Americans in the federal government and the importance of diversity in the workplace.

During Native American Heritage Month, the nation honors the legacy of American Indians and Alaska Natives, and recommit to strengthening government-to-government partnerships. FEMA acknowledges the sovereignty of federally recognized tribes and is committed to enhancing the working relationship with tribal governments to improve all hazards preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation throughout Indian Country. Effective relationships with tribes are key to fulfill FEMA's mission, and tribal governments and their members are an essential part of the nation's emergency management team. FEMA is committed to supporting Indian Country in its efforts to build more resilient and better prepared communities.

More information about FEMA's commitment to working with tribal governments is available at [www.fema.gov/tribal](http://www.fema.gov/tribal).

## Second Meeting of the Technical Mapping Advisory Council Announced

FEMA announced the second public meeting of the [Technical Mapping Advisory Council \(TMAC\)](#), scheduled for **December 4 - 5, 2014**, in Arlington, Virginia. The public meeting will be held at the FEMA South Arlington Office on December 4 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and December 5 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET. The office is located at 1800 South Bell Street, Arlington, Virginia 20598. A public comment period will also be held on December 4 from 11:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. ET and on December 5 from 9:45 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. ET.

During the public meeting, members will continue to discuss current and future possibilities for the flood mapping program to support the development of their recommendations and required reports. In addition, TMAC members will receive briefs from FEMA officials on the current mapping program and related activities and receive presentations from invited subject matter experts addressing the overall production of mapping components, future conditions and examples of next generation mapping.

TMAC members will also discuss current and future possibilities for map development by considering how mapping data is acquired, maintained and distributed; how maps are produced; how risk is assessed and communicated; how maps of risk are translated into insurance ratings; federal agency coordination and delegation of responsibility; and identify opportunities to emphasize mitigation throughout the process.

**Attendees must contact FEMA and register by December 2, 2014.** For additional information on facilities, services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the meeting, email [FEMA-TMAC@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-TMAC@fema.dhs.gov).

More information on TMAC is available at [www.fema.gov/tmac](http://www.fema.gov/tmac).

*FEMA's Office of External Affairs* provides this bulletin to highlight recent and upcoming program and policy activities and announcements. Feedback is welcome at [fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov). Previous editions are available at the [FEMA library](#).

## Open Joint Field Offices

AS, AZ, CA, HI, IA, KY, MI, MN,  
MO, NE, NV, NY, TN, WA  
[Learn more.](#)

## Before the Turkey is Served...

Thanksgiving is the [peak day](#) for home cooking fires, and frying food poses the greatest cooking fire risk. This Thanksgiving, learn how to cook safely with [USFA's cooking fire safety and prevention tips](#).

## FEMA Seeks Comments to Public Assistance Simplified Procedures Thresholds

FEMA seeks public comments from state, local, tribal and territorial governments, private non-profit organizations, and interested members of the public regarding the agency's recent revision of the Public Assistance program simplified procedures program. FEMA is seeking comments on specific questions to inform any future revisions to the project thresholds that are updated annually based on the Consumer Price Index. Comments are due on **January 20, 2015**, and may be [submitted online](#).

Following the passage of the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 and the accompanying Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, Congress directed FEMA to evaluate its simplified procedures thresholds and immediately implement the recommendations. On January 29, 2014, FEMA issued its [report to Congress](#) that recommended several changes to the threshold and outlined FEMA's reasoning. On February 26, 2014, FEMA published a [final rule](#) amending both the minimum and maximum simplified procedures threshold for disasters declared on or after February 26, 2014.

This bulletin is not intended to provide a comprehensive list of policies that are open for public comment, nor does it describe all of the instructions or requirements necessary to submit a comment. For a complete list of instructions and deadlines please click the hyperlinks included. FEMA does not endorse any non-government organizations, entities or services.

### Dangers of Deep Frying a Turkey

Frying food is [the greatest risk of cooking fires](#). Two-thirds of home cooking fires start when food or cooking materials catch on fire. More than half of home cooking fire injuries happen when people try to fight the fire themselves.

Turkey fryers can easily tip over, spilling hot cooking oil over a large area. An overfilled cooking pot will cause cooking oil to spill when the turkey is put in, and a partially frozen turkey will cause cooking oil to splatter when put in the pot. Even a small amount of cooking oil spilling on a hot burner can cause a large fire. Without thermostat controls, deep fryers can overheat oil to the point of starting a fire. The sides of the cooking pot, lid and pot handles can get dangerously hot. [This video](#) demonstrates some of the dangers of deep frying a turkey and steps that can be taken to prevent injuries and fire.



### Department of Energy Launches Mobile App for Energy Emergencies

The Department of Energy launched a free mobile app called [Lantern Live](#) that helps consumers quickly find and share critical information about nearby gas stations and power outages during energy emergencies. The app builds on the Obama Administration's commitment to improve national energy preparedness in the face of extreme weather and other events that can result in power disruptions. The app is currently available for Android devices through Google Play and will be available for iPhone in the near future.



*Lantern Live* allows users to report the operational status of local gas stations, find fuel, and look up power outage maps from local utilities, while also accessing useful tips and guidelines. With the launch of this app, the Energy Department is testing the power of crowdsourcing and open data in disaster and recovery.

Future releases of *Lantern Live* will likely include the ability to crowdsource information on the status of gas stations via standardized hashtags for social media. *Lantern Live*'s code will also be open source, allowing technology innovators and entrepreneurs to reuse the code in their own apps, explore new opportunities for other sectors and applications, and further leverage the power of open data.

Built in response to lessons learned from Hurricane Sandy, *Lantern Live* also builds on the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's Disaster Response and Recovery Initiative, which is designed to accelerate the development of open data for power outages. This app also helps lay the groundwork for emerging best practices of mobile app development across the federal government.

### REMINDER: Unified Federal Review Applicant Guidance Open for Comment

FEMA, in conjunction with its interagency Steering Group, announced the public review period for the Draft Environmental and Historic Preservation Guidance for Federal Disaster Recovery Assistance Applicants. To access the Draft Applicant Guidance and for instructions on submitting comments, visit the [Unified Federal Review webpage](#). Comments are due on **Friday, November 28, 2014**.

### REMINDER: Application Period for Fiscal Year 2014 Assistance to Firefighters Grants Open until December 5

The FY 2014 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) application period will close on **Friday, December 5, at 5 p.m. ET**. For more information, contact a fire program specialist in a [federal regional center](#) or the AFG Program Help Desk at 1-866-274-0960 or [firegrants@dhs.gov](mailto:firegrants@dhs.gov).

### REMINDER: Proposed Public Assistance Policy on Insurance Open for Comment

FEMA seeks public comments from state, tribal, territorial and local governments, private non-profit organizations and interested members of the public regarding its proposed Public Assistance policy on insurance. Comments must be submitted through the process outlined in the [Federal Register Notice](#) and are due on **Monday, December 8, 2014**.

The mission of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) is to engage, inform, and educate all of FEMA's stakeholders in support of the Agency's programs and initiatives to achieve its mission. OEA accomplishes its mission by coordinating and maintaining visibility of public and internal communications; advising FEMA program and support offices on decision-making regarding policies, plans, and actions that affect stakeholder, media, and Congressional audiences; and organizing outreach efforts targeted at principal stakeholders to include local, state, territorial, and tribal governments, the private sector, national organizations and associations, and the American public.