

**FEMA**

E-News Update

This E-News update includes information on federal and state resources available to help Texas businesses and employees recover from Hurricane Ike. We welcome your comments, questions, good stories and suggested topics. See below for details.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER, RETURN SBA APPLICATION IS FRIDAY

This Friday, **Dec. 12** is the deadline for businesses and individuals to register for assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and to submit loan applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Loan applications are sent to applicants following FEMA registration.

For individuals, filling out the SBA loan application opens the door to both low-interest loans and other grants programs. For businesses, the SBA loan application can be the first step toward low-interest loans for property repairs or rebuilding efforts and loans for the costs of replacing lost or storm-damaged personal property – including lost commercial fishing boats.



In addition, small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives and certain private, non-profit organizations of all sizes that suffered substantial economic injury resulting from the disaster may be eligible for the **SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EDIL) Program**. Substantial economic injury is the inability of a business to meet its obligations as they mature and to pay its ordinary and necessary operating expenses.

An EIDL can help organizations meet necessary financial obligations that could have been met had the disaster not occurred. If the organization is unable to obtain credit elsewhere, the SBA can provide up to \$2 million in disaster assistance. This loan cap includes both economic injury and physical damage assistance. The deadline for submitting these loan applications is June 15, 2009.

Texas disaster victims who have registered with FEMA may file an **SBA disaster loan application** online. The Electronic Loan Application is accessible via the SBA's secure Web site at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. For information about SBA programs call **1-800-659-2955** (TTY 1-800-877-8339), or visit the SBA's website at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance. Individuals may also email questions to the SBA at disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

For **FEMA registration**, go to www.fema.gov or call **1-800-621-FEMA** (3362) or TTY 1-800-462-7585. The FEMA Registration/Helpine operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE SITUATION UPDATE:

CLOSE OF BUSINESS MONDAY, DEC. 08, 2008

- Housing and Other Needs Assistance approved grants: **\$401,259,415**
- Small Business Administration approved loan amounts: **\$400,725,500**
 - Including 484 low-interest business loans - **\$63,549,600**
- Current Deadlines:
 - FEMA registration and SBA loan application: Dec. 12, 2008
 - Transitional Sheltering Assistance in Hotels & Motels (TSA): Jan. 15, 2009
 - SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan: June 15, 2009

PRE-PROPOSAL INDUSTRY DAY EXPLAINS TWO ACQUISITIONS

FEMA held their first Hurricane Ike **Pre-Proposal Industry Day** on **Monday, Dec. 8, 2008** to give businesses helpful information on two upcoming contracts. During the event, federal program experts presented overviews and took questions about the specific acquisitions to be posted for bid soon.

In addition, a four-hour afternoon session was devoted to contract and bid preparation, a program element seen as a big benefit for businesses new to federal contracting. The event was held in partnership with the University of Houston Procurement Technical Assistance Center.

During the coming months, FEMA will post additional acquisitions, including questions and answers, on **www.FedBizOpps.gov**. For a complete list of resources on how to do business with FEMA, visit <http://www.fema.gov/business/contractor.shtm>.

The Dec. 8 event covered two acquisitions, both for manufactured homes throughout the disaster area. One will be for maintenance and eventual removal of units installed in Texas in response to Hurricane Ike. The second will cover any technical assistance and hazardous mitigation issues which may arise.

FEMA program specialists were available to explain all aspects of the contracts, as well as the criteria to be used for awarding them. FEMA translators of Vietnamese, Spanish, Laotian and Chinese were present throughout the day to assist attendees who may have needed them.

The event was held from **8 a.m. to 4 p.m.** at the **Houston Community College Auditorium, 3100 Main St., Houston, TX.**

MILLIONS BILLED TO FEMA FOR HURRICANE IKE HOTEL STAYS

More than **\$310 million** has been billed to FEMA for the **hotel stays** of eligible Texans. FEMA's Transitional Sheltering Assistance program provides temporary lodging alternatives to eligible applicants who need a place to stay because they remain unable to live in their homes due to Hurricane Ike damage.

The program allows eligible individuals or families to stay in a hotel or motel for a limited time and have the cost of the room and taxes paid directly to the hotel by FEMA. Meals, telephone calls and other incidental charges are not covered.

A total of 25,000 Texans have used this program with 4,500 currently checked into participating TSA hotels. TSA-eligible applicants' status is reviewed every two weeks. The program runs through Jan. 15, 2008.

MILLIONS SENT TO TEXAS FOR LOCAL DEBRIS CLEAN-UP

More than **\$137 million** has been obligated to the State of Texas to pay for 100 percent of the **debris removal** in counties impacted by Hurricane Ike. The state reimburses the counties.

Currently FEMA is paying 100 percent of the costs and has announced a fourth extension for six months for FEMA-eligible Hurricane Ike debris removal operations. Galveston and Chambers counties are being reimbursed at 100 percent for the removal of eligible debris from private property.

FEMA does not remove debris, but does provide extensive free technical assistance to jurisdictions that plan their own debris removal using a variety of options.

SCAM ARTISTS TAKE REBUILDING FUNDS FROM BUSINESSES

Although it has been more than two months since Hurricane Ike, swindlers continue to operate throughout the disaster area. Their scams reduce the money available to pay legitimate businesses for repair work.

The three common scams are phony contractors soliciting work, bogus pleas for post-disaster donations and fake offers to help get state or federal aid. FEMA warns Texans to be especially alert for phone or door-to-door solicitors promising to speed up the insurance, disaster assistance or building-permit process, and those who ask for large cash deposits or advance payments in full for repair work.

Those who suspect someone of engaging in unscrupulous activities should call the **FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline at 1-866-720-5721**. Complaints may also be made to local law enforcement agencies and through the **Texas Attorney General Consumer Protection Hotline at 1-800-621-0508**.

Texans should call the fraud hotline if:

1. Someone claiming to be from FEMA comes to their home, calls or e-mails them and asks for their Social Security number, bank account number, FEMA registration number or other sensitive information.

NOTE: FEMA gets sensitive information when the applicant registers. **True FEMA representatives** have all that information when they contact applicants.

2. Someone claiming to be a building contractor knocks on their door and offers to make repairs or clean up debris.

NOTE: FEMA recommends using **licensed local contractors**, asking for references and checking the references before entering into a contract. Also, residents should ask for a written estimate from at least three contractors – and read the fine print before signing any contract.

3. Someone asks for a Hurricane Ike relief fund donation for an unknown charitable organization, or the person soliciting the donation requests the check be made out to a private individual.

NOTE: **Donate only to charities you know**, or simply ask the person soliciting the donation for the exact name, address and phone number of the charity, research the charity and then call to confirm the person is an employee or volunteer.

FEMA OFFERS STORM MITIGATION ADVICE AT LOCAL STORES

Teams of FEMA hazard mitigation specialists will be at Texas stores, answering questions about protecting homes and businesses from future disaster damage, as well as other storm-damage questions.

The FEMA representatives explain flood- and wind-resistant building techniques, and offer advice on topics such as building elevation, safe rooms, wind straps, flood insurance and other measures to make buildings stronger and safer. They also offer publications on similar topics.

Galveston County

The Home Depot
702 65th St.
Galveston, TX 77551
Dec. 9-14
Tuesday-Sunday
7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Harris County

Lowe's
4645 Beechnut St
Houston, TX 77096
Dec. 9-14
Tuesday-Sunday
8 a.m.-6 p.m.

Brazoria County

The Home Depot
100 Abner Jackson Pkwy
Lake Jackson, TX 77566
Dec. 9-14
Tuesday-Sunday
7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Jefferson County

Walmart
8585 Memorial Blvd.
Port Arthur, TX 77642
Dec. 8-13
Monday-Saturday
8 a.m.-6 p.m.

The Home Depot
10600 Eastex Freeway
Houston TX 77093
Dec. 9-14
Tuesday-Sunday
8 a.m.-6 p.m.

Lowe's
200 Hwy. 332 East
Lake Jackson, TX 77566
Dec. 9-14
Tuesday-Sunday
7 a.m.-7 p.m.

FEMA PRIVATE SECTOR OFFICE

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CONTACT PHONE: 512-465-5858, FAX: 512-465-5867, E-MAIL: FEMA-TX-PRIVATE-SECTOR@FEMA.GOV

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