

USE DISASTER FUNDS AS INTENDED TO ENSURE CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY

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PIERRE, S.D. – State and federal disaster assistance is bringing needed financial help to homeowners, renters and business owners who suffered damage or loss as a result of the severe storms and flooding occurring between March 13 and April 26. Emergency management officials encourage recipients to use disaster funds wisely and for their intended purpose to ensure continued eligibility for assistance.

Funds are available through grants for housing and other needs and through low-interest federal loans for repair or replacement of primary homes, personal property and business recovery.

Individuals will receive a letter stating what their disaster assistance is for, whether repairs to a specific part of the home, replacement of personal property, or rental assistance to find temporary housing while the home is being repaired.

Rental assistance is initially made available in the amount of one or two months rent. If residents are unable to return to their home for a longer period, they may be eligible for continued rental assistance, but must contact FEMA and provide documentation of how the initial aid was used. Rental assistance funds cannot be used for other disaster related needs.

If individuals have any questions about rental assistance or any other FEMA assistance they have received they may call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY)** anytime from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. central time seven days a week until further notice. Multilingual operators are available. Or individuals can visit a Disaster Recovery Centers for assistance. To find locations of center, visit www.fema.gov/DRC.



Here are tips to help you get the most out of disaster recovery assistance funds:

- Keep all of your receipts.
- Don't be tempted to pay household bills with disaster recovery payments.
- Don't use disaster recovery payments to make purchases unrelated to needs created by the disaster.

In addition to the grants available through FEMA, low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration are available to homeowners, renters, businesses and private nonprofit organizations of all sizes.

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

Completing an SBA loan application does not commit applicants to take the loan if it is offered, but applying for the loan is an important part of the federal financial disaster assistance process, and will help ensure individuals can receive all the aid they are eligible for.

Federal disaster assistance is available to renters, homeowners and businesses in Bon Homme, Charles Mix, Hutchinson, Minnehaha, Turner and Yankton counties; the Pine Ridge Reservation to include the counties of Oglala Lakota, Jackson, and Bennett; the Rosebud Reservation to include the counties of Mellette and Todd; and the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation to include the counties of Dewey and Ziebach.

