

FEMA Urges You to Spend Disaster Funds Wisely

Release Date: October 2, 2020

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – More than \$17 million in federal assistance has been approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help Alabama residents recover from the effects of Hurricane Sally. Assistance is tax-free and grants do not have to be repaid. **However, FEMA urges you to use the funds quickly, wisely and only for disaster-related expenses.**

FEMA will send you a letter listing approved uses if you were awarded a grant, including:

- home repairs (e.g., structure, water, septic and sewage systems)
- rental assistance for a different place to live temporarily
- repair or replacement of a damaged primary vehicle
- uninsured out-of-pocket medical expenses for an injury caused by the disaster
- repair or replacement of occupational specialized tools
- necessary educational materials (e.g., computers, schoolbooks, supplies)
- moving and storage expenses related to the disaster
- other disaster-related expenses

You may spend your FEMA grant in any way that helps you achieve the goal of permanent, safe, sanitary and functional housing. Remember to keep your receipts for verification of how you spent the disaster funds.

- Rental assistance grants provide for temporary housing when a disaster leaves your home uninhabitable or inaccessible.
- As a homeowner or renter, you can choose to rent an apartment, house, mobile home or some other temporary rental unit.
- If you intend to seek continued rental assistance, you will need receipts to show you used the grant for rent.



FEMA

Disaster grants are **not** for regular living expenses, such as utilities, food, medical or dental bills not related to the disaster, travel, entertainment or any discretionary expense not related to the disaster.

It is important to remember that federal law prohibits duplicating federal grants from other sources. FEMA also encourages you to keep your receipts for three years to show how you spent funds.

When you get a letter from FEMA, read it carefully. If you have any questions, call the FEMA Helpline, 800-621-3362. TTY users can call 800-462-7585 6 a.m. to midnight central time, seven days a week.

For the latest information on Hurricane Sally, visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4563>

