

# Reminder! Check Utilities Such as Water Heaters Before Winter

---

**Release Date: September 6, 2024**

**ST. PAUL** – With the late summer heat across Minnesota, the last thing you may be thinking about is the winter months ahead. But as temperatures drop, your furnace will become the most important appliance in your home. Ahead of the cold weather, FEMA suggests making sure your heating systems, water heaters and other appliances in your primary residence are in good working condition if you were impacted by the June 16 - July 4 severe storms and floods.

If floodwaters reached your home heating systems, you should have them checked for operating safety by experienced repair personnel. If you are a homeowner, and your essential appliances were damaged or destroyed in your primary residence, by the storms, you may be able to receive funds from FEMA to get them repaired or replaced. FEMA home repair assistance is intended to make the damaged home safe, sanitary, and functional to essential living areas.

First, you must apply for FEMA assistance. When filling out the application make sure to report any disaster-caused damage to the furnace, water heater, other electrical appliances and occupied, lower-level rooms. After applying, a FEMA housing inspector may contact you to schedule an appointment to verify damage you reported on your application. FEMA inspectors do not decide if you will receive funds. After the home inspection is completed, FEMA specialists review your application, the results of the inspection and/or documentation submitted to determine all damage and losses that may be eligible. A FEMA decision letter will be sent to you by email or U.S. postal service mail.

## **Appealing a FEMA Decision with New Documentation**

If you received a FEMA grant to repair your furnace and/or water heater and later discover those items need to be replaced, you may choose to appeal to FEMA for additional grant funds. Appeals must be submitted within 60 days of the date on the decision letter.



Your FEMA letter will detail information on what will need to be provided if you choose to appeal FEMA's decision. Your decision letter also includes an Appeal Request Form that may be used to help provide additional information like copies of supporting documents including proof of your disaster-caused losses. All submitted documents, receipts, bills, and estimates must include contact information of the service provider/contractor.

Your appeal may be submitted by fax or mail, in-person, or online if you have a FEMA online account. To set up a FEMA online account, visit [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov), click on "Apply Online" and follow the directions.

- **By mail:**

- FEMA National Processing Service Center, P.O. Box 10055, Hyattsville, MD 20782-7055

- **By fax:** 800-827-8112, Attention: FEMA

- **In-person:** Visit any Disaster Recovery Center to submit your appeal. Find a center here: [fema.gov/DRC](https://fema.gov/DRC).

To learn more about FEMA's appeal process, visit [www.fema.gov/assistance/individual/after-applying/appeals](https://www.fema.gov/assistance/individual/after-applying/appeals).

Disaster Survivors who have not yet applied for FEMA assistance should apply online at [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://DisasterAssistance.gov), use the [FEMA App](#) on your phone, visit a [Disaster Recovery Center](#) or call 800-621-3362. If you use a relay service such as video relay service, captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA your number for that service when you apply.

The deadline to apply with FEMA is September 27, 2024. For even more information about the disaster recovery operation in Minnesota visit [www.fema.gov/disaster/4797](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4797).



FEMA