

One Year Later, Tornado Recovery Continues to Make Progress

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FRANKFORT, Ky.— On the night of Dec. 10, 2021, deadly tornadoes swept through Western Kentucky, causing an estimated \$305 million in damage to homes, churches and businesses in Mayfield, Dawson Springs, Bowling Green and other communities.

In Mayfield alone – a city of 10,000 residents -- the deadly tornadoes destroyed 257 homes and damaged another 1,000, according to the city. Most of its historic town center was destroyed.

In the aftermath, first responders and emergency managers, nonprofits, Commonwealth and FEMA officials rushed to the scene, making an all-out effort to assess the damage and assist to survivors.

Gov. Andy Beshear established the Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund, which received 150,000 donations totaling \$52 million. The money went to help with recovery needs, including funeral expenses for each of the victims, construction of new homes, funding for insured and uninsured homeowners and renters and local farmers impacted by the destruction of the Mayfield Grain Co.

The governor expressed his gratitude to the individuals and organizations that donated to the fund.

“Every single donation made a difference in our rebuilding and recovery efforts,” Gov. Beshear said.

FEMA also stepped in early at the request of the governor. The tornado-stricken counties received a presidential declaration two days after the tornadoes struck. The declaration allowed residents and communities to apply for federal assistance for a variety of recovery programs.



FEMA

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“FEMA has been in Kentucky since the beginning, coordinating efforts with the commonwealth, and providing much needed assistance to individuals and communities,” said Federal Coordinating Officer in charge of Kentucky recovery Myra Shird. “We’ve provided dollars directly to survivors, we’ve brought technical support from our federal partners like the Army Corp of Engineers, and we’ve worked with the commonwealth to provide temporary housing to those who lost everything.”

Now, one year after the tornado disaster, families, businesses and communities are rebuilding. It’s estimated that between \$50 to \$100 million in insurance payments have flowed into these communities helping homeowners and businesses rebuild safer and stronger. While an additional more than \$75 million in federal assistance from FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration has helped those with disaster-related needs not met by insurance or other assistance.

Federal Assistance By the Numbers

As of Dec. 2, 2022

FEMA INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

Sixteen counties were designated for federal assistance under FEMA’s Individuals and Households Program: Barren, Caldwell, Christian, Fulton, Graves, Hart, Hickman, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Taylor and Warren.

- More than \$15.9 million approved for individuals and households, including:
 - More than \$11.5 million approved for Housing Assistance
 - Nearly \$4.4 million approved for Other Needs Assistance, which helps to replace essential household items and other critical disaster-related needs

TEMPORARY HOUSING

- Currently, 55 families are participating in FEMA’s Direct Temporary Housing program in six designated counties: Caldwell, Graves, Hopkins, Marshall,



Muhlenberg and Warren.

- 37 families have moved out of FEMA's Direct Temporary Housing and into their permanent housing.
- Nearly 1,600 families received temporary rental assistance from FEMA. They receive up to 18 months of rental assistance while they repair their tornado-damaged homes or find other permanent housing.

U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

- 654 disaster loans approved for homeowners, renters, and businesses for nearly \$59.8 million.
 - More than \$50.6 million in home loans
 - Nearly \$9.2 million in business loans

FEMA PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Twenty-three counties are eligible for Public Assistance: Barren, Breckinridge, Bullitt, Caldwell, Christian, Fulton, Graves, Grayson, Hart, Hickman, Hopkins, Logan, Lyon, Marion, Marshall, Meade, Muhlenberg, Ohio, Shelby, Spencer, Taylor, Todd and Warren.

Under FEMA's Public Assistance program, communities get help with the cost of repair, rebuilding and emergency work including reimbursements for debris removal, damaged roads and infrastructure

In total, FEMA's Public Assistance Program has approved more than \$30.6 million for Western Kentucky.

"Whenever there is a disaster the name FEMA is on the tip of everyone's tongue, but disaster recovery is always a team effort," said FCO Shird, "it's local and voluntary agencies, communities and individuals. We all have a stake in this recovery. FEMA will continue to support the commonwealth to help meet their vision of what the future of these communities looks like."

As the recovery progresses, nonprofits continue to help with activities ranging from building homes to helping survivors with their critical needs such as home repairs, appliances and vehicle repair or replacement.



Here are examples of recovery efforts during the past year:

Nonprofit Organizations and Citizens' Groups

The Team Western Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund pledged \$16 million to build 300 homes in the tornado-devastated areas, and nonprofits have been tapped to help with construction. To date, 35 families have received keys to a new home built in cooperation with Homes and Hope for Kentucky, Habitat for Humanity and the Fuller Center on Housing plan.

Local long-term recovery groups have been operating in Caldwell, Hopkins, Marshall, Muhlenberg and Ohio counties as well as the City of Mayfield and the City of Bowling Green.

These groups are focused on temporary rental, utility and security deposit assistance as well as structural repairs to survivors' homes. They may provide spiritual and emotional resources, essential appliances for homes and transportation needs for medical transportation, work and school.

One long-term recovery group, the Mayfield Graves County Long-Term Recovery Group, is organizing Home for the Holidays for tornado survivors. This program is trying to place 25 families into 25 homes by Dec. 25, 2022. The goal is to place homeless renters into permanent housing by utilizing existing vacant homes throughout the community.

"We have made a lot of progress, but our work will continue until every structure and life is rebuilt," Gov. Beshear said. "We will continue bringing new economic promise to this area to ensure these communities have a brighter future than ever before."

For information on Kentucky's recovery from the tornadoes, visit fema.gov/disaster/4630. Follow FEMA on Twitter at FEMA Region 4 (@femaregion4) / Twitter and at facebook.com/fema.

