

# FEMA Continues Hurricane Zeta Response, Recovery Efforts

---

Release Date: ?? 30, 2020

WASHINGTON - As FEMA Administrator Pete Gaynor visits Louisiana for the fourth time since hurricanes Laura, Sally, Delta and Zeta devastated the state, federal workers are on the ground, working around the clock making roads accessible and providing emergency power. Administrator Gaynor is in Louisiana today meeting with state and local officials, including Gov. John Bel Edwards and New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell to help address immediate needs. Administrator Gaynor is also joined by FEMA Region 6 Administrator Tony Robinson.

President Trump amended the Major Disaster Declaration for Louisiana as a result of Hurricane Laura. The amendment allows for 100% federal cost share for 30 days for both debris removal and emergency protective measures. FEMA is leaning forward with our federal, state, local and tribal partners to support a state managed, locally executed response to impacts from Hurricane Zeta.

## Federal Support Responding to Hurricane Zeta

- President Trump approved an Emergency Declaration for [Louisiana](#) and [Mississippi](#). The declarations authorize FEMA to provide emergency protective measures including direct federal assistance for 35 parishes in Louisiana and 13 counties in Mississippi. Additionally, FEMA is authorized to provide emergency protective measures limited to direct federal assistance to 29 parishes in Louisiana.
- Major Disaster Declarations were previously approved for hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta.
- In Louisiana, FEMA has awarded approximately \$186 million in grants and \$28 million in flood insurance claims to survivors from hurricanes Laura and Delta. The U.S. Small Business Administration also approved more than \$372 million in low-interest loans to Louisiana survivors.
- FEMA has awarded more than \$54 million in assistance to individuals in Alabama and has paid more than \$27 million for flood insurance claims in



Alabama for Hurricane Sally. The U.S. Small Business Administration also approved more than \$61 million in low-interest loans to Alabama survivors.

## Commodities

- FEMA pre-staged more than 6 million meals, nearly 8 million liters of bottled water and 45 generators. Other commodities include:
  - Blankets, tarps, blue roof sheeting and cots are staged and available to support affected states based on need and requests to FEMA.
  - A refrigerated mobile trailer with 19,000 meals is staged in Lake Charles, Louisiana.
  - FEMA is processing an order of 50,000 tarps to Louisiana and 30,000 tarps to Mississippi. Additionally, FEMA is shipping more than 131,000 meals and 100,000 liters of water to Mississippi.

## Personnel Deployed

- Two Region 4 Incident Management Assistance Teams (IMATs) are onsite at state Emergency Operations Centers in Clanton, Alabama and Pearl, Mississippi to support response activities and ensure there are no unmet needs.
- Mobile Emergency Operations Vehicles are supporting federal and state response and command and control missions with emergency communication capabilities.
- The Urban Search and Rescue teams activated for Zeta have demobilized. FEMA's Urban Search and Rescue Incident Support Team deactivated from Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- Two Disaster Medical Assistance Teams are rostered.
- Power restoration teams and equipment are pre-staged in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi and are actively responding as conditions permit.
- National Guard Bureau teams, including search and rescue and logistics operations are staged throughout the affected areas. Two National Guard Bureau teams are activated to check levees in Louisiana.
- Additional federal personnel from the Department of Transportation, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Energy, DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency and Defense Coordinating Element have been tasked if needed to support FEMA and the affected states and tribes.



## Key Messages

- Hurricane Zeta affected areas already impacted by other hurricanes, further increasing the threat of dangerous flooding. Flooding from a previous storm could be worsened with additional rainfall from this storm system.
- Be aware of continued risks such as flooding, storm debris and downed power lines.
- Significant power outages are reported across areas impacted by Hurricane Zeta.
- Many people who were in the path of Zeta are still recovering from hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta and may be feeling storm fatigue. We encourage anyone impacted by the storm to stay strong, remain vigilant and take care of your mental and physical well-being.
- Recovering from a disaster is usually a gradual process, and FEMA will continue to support you as you recover from hurricanes Laura, Sally and Delta.
- FEMA adapted its plans to the realities of responding during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure we can serve Americans while protecting their safety and that of FEMA employees.

## Stay Alert to Continued Risks; Heed Instructions from Local Officials.

- Don't drive or walk through flood waters. Be aware of downed power lines, standing water and other hidden hazards.
- If you have evacuated, do not return until local officials say it's safe to do so.
- Use caution and stay safe during recovery. Use extreme caution when operating heavy machinery, generators, or while removing debris. Never use generators indoors and keep them away from windows, doors and vents.
- Wear sturdy shoes or boots when walking on, or near, debris. Wear long sleeves and gloves when handling debris.
- When clearing debris from a property, know the location of all utilities, both underground and overhead to prevent injury. Do not place items in front of, around or on top of buried and above ground utilities.
  - Use caution around any buried utilities. Cutting vital communications assets such as fiber optic lines can cause a loss of cellular networks, including cell phone service or access to the internet. Residents should call 8-1-1 before digging so utilities can be marked in advance.
- Remember to stay safe, whether you're a responder or survivor. [Wear a mask](#) in public settings especially when [social distancing](#) is not possible and follow [CDC](#)



### [guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.](#)

- FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program is ready to respond quickly to insured flood losses that arise as a result of the storm.
  - If you have a flood insurance policy and you've suffered flood damage, your first step is to call your flood insurance company to file a claim.
  - Adjusters are available to process claims quickly.
  - If you previously suffered a flood loss, you will need to document new damages and be prepared to provide receipts and documentation for any repairs you made from your prior loss.
- Disaster Recovery Centers in Acadia, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Sabine, St. Landry, Vermilion and Vernon parishes in Louisiana have reopened.
- Hurricane Laura, Sally and Delta survivors can still register for federal assistance by visiting [disasterassistance.gov](https://disasterassistance.gov), by calling 800-621-3362 (TTY 800-462-7585) or through the FEMA mobile app.

## **Sheltering**

- Congregate shelters are supporting survivors in areas impacted by Hurricane Zeta.
- In Louisiana five congregate shelters are open with fewer than 100 people. Three additional shelters are on standby.
- In Mississippi four congregate shelters are open with 69 people.
- The American Red Cross is prepared to shelter and support families. For assistance, call 3-1-1 or visit their [website](#).

## **Responding During COVID-19**

- FEMA will continue to work with our state, tribal and local partners as they plan for execution of evacuation and sheltering operations in a COVID-19 environment. Finding shelter is critical in times of disaster. Shelter outside of the hazard area could include staying with family or friends, seeking a hotel room or staying in a mass shelter.
- FEMA, other federal agencies and the American Red Cross have modified policies and planning and have taken actions to ensure the federal government can respond to any disaster during our continued coronavirus response efforts.
- In alignment with FEMA's [Pandemic Operational Guidance](#), FEMA is leveraging technology to deliver the agency's programs at the highest level possible, while preserving our workforce and survivors. These methods include virtual damage



**FEMA**

assessments and inspections for FEMA Individual Assistance and Public Assistance programs, as well as National Flood Insurance Program claims.

- While some aspects of program delivery may look different this year, our commitment to helping people before, during and after disaster remains our full focus and we are ready to deliver on our mission.
- In advance of hurricane and wildfire season, FEMA expanded the capacity of its National Response Coordination Center, response centers around the country and trained additional staff to be postured to respond to multiple on-going incidents.

