



Disaster Assistance Clarification

June 17, 2008

To: All disaster response staff, both state and federal

To: All Iowans who sustained damage in recent storms

To: Iowa media

Re: Possible confusion regarding state and federal disaster assistance grants

Applying for help. Iowa residents who sustained damage in this year's storms or floods should apply for federal or state-only disaster assistance grants if they are available. Residents are not eligible for both. By design, the federal program is far more generous than the state-funded Iowa-only program.

How do I know?

- Iowa's program is automatically turned on when the governor declares a county to be a disaster. He has declared 83 counties so far.
- Iowa's program is automatically superceded when the president declares a county to be a disaster for individual assistance.

The state program. This is a grant program only for people with very limited income (at or below 130 percent of federal poverty guidelines). Generally, if you are eligible for food stamps, you are eligible for the grant program. The grant is offered in numerous categories, with the maximum grant being about \$3,300. For information, go to dhs.iowa.gov and look for the words "Storm Help" on the front page. Or call toll free (877) 937-3663.

The federal program. The federal government offers extensive grants and loans for Iowans in areas declared a presidential disaster for individual assistance. The federal program is far more beneficial to victims, both in grant maximum amounts and in eligibility criterion. Specifically, it is not limited to people with very low incomes. A good starting point for federal programs relating to the Iowa disaster is this web site. <http://www.fema.gov/news/event.fema?id=9867> Or call (800) 621-3362.

What happens if there is a conflict? So far, nobody has filed for grants under the state disaster program in an area that is declared a federal disaster. In the unlikely event that this happens, DHS staff will make contact and help steer the person to more beneficial federal programs. Federal programs offer much more aid and are not limited to low income families.

Questions?

DHS public information

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