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FEMA

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Disaster News

SOME NON-CITIZENS CAN GET DISASTER AID

DES MOINES, Iowa – Even if you are not a U.S. citizen you may be able to receive disaster assistance, according to officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

FEMA grants help with disaster-related expenses such as repairing your home, renting a temporary place if your home was destroyed or replacing lost personal property.

FEMA and the state can provide assistance to U.S. citizens, non-citizen nationals and what are legally termed “qualified aliens.” If you are not eligible, but you have a child who is a citizen, non-citizen national, or a qualified alien, you may apply for assistance on behalf of the child, and you do not have to give information about your own citizenship or immigration status.

You are a qualified alien if you have a legal permanent resident card, INS Form I-551 or “Green Card.” You’re also a qualified alien if you have legal status because of refugee or asylum status, withholding of deportation, conditional entry, and parole into the U. S. for at least one year for humanitarian purposes; are a Cuban or Haitian entrant, or have a pending or approved petition for relief based on battery or extreme cruelty by a family member.

You are not a qualified alien if you have a temporary tourist, student or work visa or a temporary resident card (INS Form I-688).

If you are a qualified alien or applying on behalf of a qualified alien, and you live in one of the counties eligible for federal assistance, register by calling FEMA toll-free at **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or for those with speech- or hearing- impairments **TTY 1-800-462-7585**. Representatives are available from 6 a.m.-11 p.m. seven days a week until further notice, with service in many languages. You can also register anytime at www.fema.gov.

Even if you are not eligible for grants from FEMA, disaster assistance is also available from many voluntary agencies. Your citizenship or immigration status does not matter there. Some of these agencies are the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and Catholic Charities.

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FEMA coordinates the federal government’s role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, English proficiency, or economic status. If you or someone you known has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY Call 800-462-7585.

Editors: More information about the Iowa disaster is available online at www.fema.gov or www.Iowahomelandsecurity.org.