

**MORE THAN \$1 MILLION IN DISASTER AID FLOWS TO STORM VICTIMS**  
Individuals, Businesses, Non-Profits and Local Governments Receive Funding For Disaster Recovery

**SYRACUSE, NY--** More than \$1 million has been approved for victims of the severe storms, flooding and tornadoes that struck New York State between July 21 and August 13, 2003, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today. That aid has already been provided to 1369 households in the form of grants.

"The severe storms, flooding and tornadoes were a traumatic event for hundreds of New Yorkers. The individuals and homeowners that suffered damages and have registered with FEMA are now getting the financial assistance they need and are eligible for," said Justo Hernandez, federal coordinating officer for FEMA's disaster recovery operation.

"We have mobile disaster recovery centers staffed with experts that are located in the affected counties where renters, homeowners and business owners can visit to have their questions answered, to get help in completing SBA loan applications and to find out how to prevent future disaster damages," said Hernandez. "But before coming to the recovery centers, they should register with FEMA first."

The toll-free Teleregistration/Hotline is 1-800-621-FEMA (3363). Hearing and/or speech impaired individuals can call 1-800-462-7585 (TTY). The telephone lines are staffed seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Disaster programs available to eligible homeowners, renters and businesses in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chemung, Columbia, Delaware, Fulton, Greene, Livingston, Montgomery, Ontario, Rensselaer, Schuyler, Steuben and Yates counties include home repair; temporary housing; disaster-related needs for personal property losses; reimbursement for medical, dental and transportation expenses; and low-interest disaster loans from the U. S. Small Business Administration. (SBA)

Non-profit organizations, schools, hospitals, Tribal Nations and government entities in Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chemung, Columbia, Delaware, Fulton, Livingston, Montgomery, Ontario, Schuyler, Steuben and Yates counties may be eligible to recover costs for measures taken to save lives, ensure public health and safety, protect property, remove debris and repair infrastructure under FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program.

"SBA has approved \$29,000 in low-interest loans for four applicants," said William E. Leggiero, Jr., SBA area director. "We have issued 932 SBA loan applications, but only 130 of them have been returned to us. Completing an SBA application is an important step in the disaster assistance process. But, returning it is an equally important next step." Leggiero, Jr. stressed that filing a loan application in no way obligates the applicant to accept a loan, and he urged applicants to return loan applications regardless of pending insurance settlements. Additional information regarding SBA's disaster loan program is available at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

"Even if applicants do not qualify for SBA loans, they will automatically be considered for other disaster assistance from FEMA and the state," Hernandez added. "But, when disaster applicants fail to return SBA loan applications, they may remove themselves from consideration for further aid."

At the request of Governor George E. Pataki, President Bush signed a major disaster declaration on August 29, 2003 to provide assistance to the counties affected during the severe storms, flooding and tornadoes that hit the state.