



**FEMA**

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# Disaster News

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## **DISASTER OFFICIALS URGE APPLICANTS TO SAVE RECEIPTS**

**Madison, Wis.** – If you received rental funds or other disaster aid as a result of the June storms, save your receipts, disaster-management officials said.

"Providing receipts is one of the key steps disaster-aid applicants can take to qualify for available grant funds," said Federal Coordinating Officer Dolph Diemont of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Federal coordinating officers lead the U.S. government side of joint federal/state disaster operations.

Households currently receiving rental assistance through FEMA, for example, must provide receipts to recertify for continued rental help. Applicants must submit rent receipts with the landlords' names and contact numbers, valid lease agreements, and statements of need for continued assistance.

Residents whose home cannot be lived in may receive rental payments through FEMA's housing assistance program. Lump-sum grants, made to households, are designed to provide rent at fair market rates. The recertification process allows FEMA to be a good steward of taxpayer dollars by requiring the applicant to demonstrate that the financial assistance was used for rent.

Even those who spent their initial rental assistance on items other than rent may be able to recertify for another three month's rent if they used the money for other emergency purposes, such as food, transportation, medical needs or lodging.

"The state has worked closely with FEMA to help displaced individuals as they recover from the June storms and flooding," said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Johnnie Smith. "Being able to provide us with accurate records will help many individuals qualify for a wide range of available federal, state and local programs."

Individuals and families with property that was damaged or destroyed and with losses not covered by insurance may be eligible to receive cash grants. State and federal officials who inspect a victim's property for damages will need receipts to accurately determine losses.

The FEMA Individuals and Households Program (IHP) addresses housing repairs, temporary housing, and other needs assistance, including personal property. Some examples of possible assistance from the IHP program are:

### **Housing Assistance**

- Home repair cash grant
- Lodging expenses reimbursement (for a hotel or motel)
- Rental assistance (cash payment for a temporary rental unit)

(more)

*Save Your Receipts, p. 2*

### **Other Needs Assistance**

- Clothing
- Specialized tools required for your job
- Medical, dental, funeral costs
- Moving and storage expenses
- Transportation costs
- Other disaster-related needs

Another important reminder for disaster victims is to take and save photographs of damaged property before it is repaired. After completing the work, applicants should save their receipts for three years.

Every housing assistance request is treated individually, as each situation is different. After FEMA reviews the applicant's information, a determination is made according to the level of need and the disaster assistance allowed by law.

State and federal officials stress that housing funds are to be used only for disaster-related damages or losses. To report fraud, waste or abuse in FEMA programs call the Fraud Hotline at 1-800-323-8603 . The hotline is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and all calls remain confidential. To report fraud via mail, write to:  
Department of Homeland Security, Attn: Office of the Inspector General, Hotline, Office of Investigation, 245 Murray Drive S.W. , Building 410/2600, Washington , D.C. 20528 .

For all other questions, applicants can call the FEMA Helpline at **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585** for those speech- or hearing-impairment. Information also is available at [www.FEMA.gov](http://www.FEMA.gov).

*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.*

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Editors: For more information on Wisconsin disaster recovery, visit <http://emergencymanagement.wi.gov/> or [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).