



*Published by the  
U.S. Department of  
Homeland Security's  
Federal Emergency  
Management Agency  
and the  
State of Louisiana*

*For disaster-related  
information visit  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)  
[www.louisiana.gov](http://www.louisiana.gov)*

*Apply by Phone  
(800) 621-FEMA (3362)*

*TTY: (800) 462-7585*

*Call 24 hours a day  
seven days a week*

# Recovery Times

Oct. 6, 2005

Baton Rouge, La.

Vol. 1, Issue 5

## Returning home safely

- Local stores may be closed, so bring food and drinking water with you, and fill your car with gas. Pick up batteries for flashlights and radios. Listen to local radio for news about your neighborhood's water supply, power and sewage system.
- Wash frequently with soap and bottled water. Wear rubber gloves and rubber boots for cleanup.
- If you cut yourself while cleaning up, get a tetanus shot if you have not had one in five years. Contact the nearest parish health unit.
- Sewage systems may have been damaged. Do not flush your toilets until you know it is safe. Use bottled water for drinking and washing until you are notified the tap water is safe.
- When you enter your home, sniff the air and listen for the hiss of gas. If you suspect leaking gas, go outside immediately and contact your gas company.
- If you see sparks or broken wires, or if you smell burning insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you must step in water to get to it, consult an electrician first.
- Never turn power on or off or use an electrical appliance while standing in water.
- If you have electricity, use a wet-dry shop vacuum, the vacuum function of a steam carpet cleaner or a sump pump to remove standing water. Basements should be pumped out slowly, about one-third of the water each day, to prevent the water-soaked ground from causing basement walls to collapse.
- Keep windows and doors open and use fans and dehumidifiers to dry out the house. Fans should be placed at a window or door blowing out.
- If your home heating, ventilating and air-conditioning system was flooded, have it checked by a professional before you turn it on.
- Throw away food items that may have been in contact with floodwaters. When in doubt, throw it out.

**For more information,  
visit the Louisiana Department of Health  
and Hospitals Web site at  
[www.DHH.louisiana.gov](http://www.DHH.louisiana.gov) or call (225) 342-9500;  
or visit the Center for Disease Control at  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call (800) 232-4636**

### Important Contacts

**FEMA**  
(800) 621-FEMA (3362)  
(800) 462-7585 (TTY)  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

**SBA Disaster Helpline**  
(800) 659-2955

**American Red Cross**  
(866) GET-INFO

**American Red Cross  
Financial Assistance**  
(800) 975-7585

**Department of Social  
Services**  
(888) 524-3578

**Disaster Legal Services**  
(800) 310-7029

**Find Family National  
Call Center**  
(866) 326-9393

**Postal Services**  
(800) 275-8777

**Project Share a Home**  
(888) 827-2525

**Social Security**  
(800) 772-1213  
(800) 325-0778 (TTY)

**Salvation Army**  
(888) 363-2769

**Crisis Counseling**  
(800) 273-8255  
(866) 615-8700  
(888) 622-6470

**For information on ...**  
Shelters, food, clothing, baby  
items, health and dental care  
dial 2-1-1

# Disaster assistance

## Harmed by Katrina and Rita?

Victims of Hurricane Katrina who have suffered additional damage from Hurricane Rita must submit a separate registration with FEMA for damages suffered from Hurricane Rita.

Applicants who have not returned home since Hurricane Katrina should report that there was damage from Hurricane Rita, even if they are unsure of the details.

Registering with other agencies does not register you with FEMA.

## American Red Cross or FEMA?

- American Red Cross emergency help may include food, clothing, medicine, and a place to stay short term such as a shelter or hotel. In some cases, ARC provides on-site financial assistance for immediate needs.
- FEMA may help you find a temporary place to live while you are getting your house fixed or finding a new one. Call FEMA to register for transitional housing. FEMA does not distribute cash or vouchers on-site at any Disaster Recovery Center.

## If you were homeless or living in public housing before Katrina...

The Department of Housing and Urban Development offers a housing voucher for victims who were homeless or living in public housing prior to the hurricanes, and for families not eligible for FEMA's transitional housing program. To get help, register with FEMA.

**CALL 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**

**WWW.FEMA.GOV**

### *New Orleans residents*

The City of New Orleans is announcing a new information hotline for residents and business owners. Call toll-free (877) 286-6431 for regularly updated information about New Orleans. The city is unable to return messages left on this line.

For additional information, visit the city of New Orleans Web site, [www.cityofno.com](http://www.cityofno.com).

## Home inspections

- After a homeowner applies for FEMA aid, inspectors call to set up a time to inspect the home.

- Inspectors verify damages. They do not determine eligibility.

- You can expect to hear from an inspector to set an appointment within 10 to 14

days after you call

FEMA to register.

However, given the large number of people who suffered damage, it may take longer.

- If your home remains inaccessible, FEMA offers an initial three months of rental assistance, but you must register with FEMA.

- You can call the FEMA Helpline at (800) 621-FEMA (3362) to check the status of your application.

- Ask the inspector for a laminated FEMA

identification card. A FEMA shirt or jacket is not proof that someone works for FEMA. Remember, **FEMA never charges for services**. If you suspect wrongdoing, report it to local law enforcement or the Hurricanes Katrina and Rita Fraud Hotline (866) 720-5721.

### *Good to Know*

**If you can't meet the home inspector at your residence, you can identify an "authorized agent" who can be present during the inspection, such as a trusted neighbor or relative. If you don't have someone who can represent you, the inspector can offer an authorized agent who is a FEMA employee to act on your behalf.**

## What to do about mold

- For mold on hard, non-porous surfaces like tile or floors, wash surface with a household detergent or disinfectant and dry thoroughly. Use a water and chlorine bleach mix in a well ventilated place. Also, never mix bleach with ammonia — it produces toxic fumes. Wear rubber gloves when cleaning mold.

- People with respiratory difficulties should not be in houses with mold. Those doing the cleanup should wear a mask rated n95, available in hardware and building materials stores.

- Porous surfaces such as carpets, mattresses, upholstered furniture, insulation and ceiling tiles should be discarded. In addition, discard refrigerators and appliances with contaminated insulation.

- Wallboard, drywall and particle board are porous and should be discarded. Water can travel up two feet or more above the visible waterline.

# News from around Louisiana

## **Debris burning can be dangerous**

The Department of Agriculture warns residents of the dangers of burning cleared debris. Uncleared dry trees and brush are highly susceptible to airborne embers. Residents are urged to think twice about burning and to contact the local fire department if they have questions about burning debris.

## **Department of Culture Recreation and Tourism recovers artifacts of Louisiana's past**

CRT, which operates under the administration of the Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu, has been monitoring damaged state museums and securing the collections housed within them. The U.S. Mint in New Orleans, home to many of these Louisiana State Museum collections, sustained severe roof damage. For more information on the work being undertaken to rescue Louisiana cultural treasures, visit the CRT Message Exchange at [www.louisianahp.org/rescue](http://www.louisianahp.org/rescue).

## **Department of Social Services hotline provides assistance for foster families and food stamps**

DSS has requested additional Disaster Food Stamp benefits for victims of Hurricane Rita, similar to those received by victims of Hurricane Katrina. A request has been made to provide assistance for residents of the following parishes: Acadia, Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Iberia, Jefferson

Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne and Vermilion. Individuals who have received Disaster Food Stamp benefits may use them in any state in the nation.

For information about the Disaster Food Stamp Program or other social services, visit the DSS website at [www.familiesla.com](http://www.familiesla.com). You may also call (888) 524-3578.

## **Department of Environmental Quality offers guidance for small business recovery**

A phone line for small business owners and employees has been established to address small business recovery operations. Questions related to the environmental impact of affected inventory or other property can be addressed by calling (225) 219-3258, or in-state, toll-free (800) 259-2890.

## **Department of Corrections update for relatives of inmates**

If you are trying to locate a loved one from a storm-affected area who is incarcerated, call (225) 342-3998 or (225) 342-5935 so that the Department of Corrections may assist you in your search.

The Department is also asking all offenders under probation and parole supervision who were displaced due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to call in and report their whereabouts to Probation and Parole Headquarters. Call (800) 869-2909 or (225) 342-0921.

## **Louisiana Seafood Board launches message board for gulf coast seafood industry**

The Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, sponsored by the Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, has partnered with Seafood Business magazine to provide a web message board designed to help members of the Gulf Coast and Louisiana seafood industry affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Visit [www.LouisianaSeafood.com](http://www.LouisianaSeafood.com).

## **Louisiana Department of Economic Development launches website**

LED has launched a dedicated Web site, [www.LEDforward.louisiana.gov](http://www.LEDforward.louisiana.gov), and toll-free number (866) 310-7617, to provide direct support to businesses impacted by Katrina and Rita.

For businesses needing personal assistance with the SBA loan application process, LED has partnered with the Louisiana Small Business Development Center Network's 11 statewide sites. SBDC staff will personally assist local businesses applying for SBA loans, offer disaster relief workshops and provide counseling for impacted businesses. SBDC services are free. Visit [www.lsbdc.org](http://www.lsbdc.org) or call (866) 782-4159 for schedules and locations.

# More Disaster Recovery Centers open

People affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita can go to any one of the 27 Disaster Recovery Centers now open for assistance. Representatives of local, state, federal and voluntary agencies, as well as customer service representatives from the Small Business Administration, are on hand to provide further information on various disaster programs.

Check your local newspaper for locations. If possible, register first with FEMA either by phone or online.

DRCs are open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., seven days a week, except for the Plaquemines Parish DRC, which is open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**No cash, checks, debit cards or vouchers are distributed at DRCs.**

# Louisiana websites easy to remember

Did you know the State of Louisiana executive offices maintain official websites that offer specific information for a variety of common questions? The system is easy to remember. The majority of departments utilize the first letter of the words within their title, followed by "louisiana.gov." For example, the Louisiana Department of Social Services is [www.dss.louisiana.gov](http://www.dss.louisiana.gov).

A handful of state websites have addresses ending with "state.la.us." For instance, the Louisiana Department of Insurance is found by visiting [www.lidi.state.la.us](http://www.lidi.state.la.us). As our recovery continues, Louisiana residents are regularly finding the information they are looking for within these pages.

## Sites ending in ".louisiana.gov"

<a href="http://www.gov.louisiana.gov">www.gov.louisiana.gov</a>	Office of the Governor
<a href="http://www.doa.louisiana.gov">www.doa.louisiana.gov</a>	Division of Administration
<a href="http://www.ldaf.louisiana.gov">www.ldaf.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Agriculture and Forestry
<a href="http://www.ag.louisiana.gov">www.ag.louisiana.gov</a>	Office of the Attorney General
<a href="http://www.doc.louisiana.gov">www.doc.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Corrections
<a href="http://www.crt.louisiana.gov">www.crt.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
<a href="http://www.doe.louisiana.gov">www.doe.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Education
<a href="http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov">www.dhh.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Health and Hospitals
<a href="http://www.dnr.louisiana.gov">www.dnr.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Natural Resources
<a href="http://www.dps.louisiana.gov">www.dps.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Public Safety
<a href="http://www.sos.louisiana.gov">www.sos.louisiana.gov</a>	Office of the Secretary of State
<a href="http://www.dss.louisiana.gov">www.dss.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Social Services
<a href="http://www.dotd.louisiana.gov">www.dotd.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Transportation and Development
<a href="http://www.treasury.louisiana.gov">www.treasury.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of the Treasury
<a href="http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov">www.wlf.louisiana.gov</a>	Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
<a href="http://www.ojd.louisiana.gov">www.ojd.louisiana.gov</a>	Office of Youth Development
<a href="http://www.ohsep.louisiana.gov">www.ohsep.louisiana.gov</a>	Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
<a href="http://www.katrina.louisiana.gov">www.katrina.louisiana.gov</a>	Hurricane Katrina Website

## Sites ending in ".state.la.us"

<a href="http://www.dscs.state.la.us">www.dscs.state.la.us</a>	Department of Civil Service
<a href="http://www.lded.state.la.us">www.lded.state.la.us</a>	Louisiana Economic Development
<a href="http://www.lidi.state.la.us">www.lidi.state.la.us</a>	Department of Insurance
<a href="http://www.regents.state.la.us">www.regents.state.la.us</a>	Board of Regents (state colleges and universities)

## Other Louisiana sites include

<a href="http://www.vetaffairs.com">www.vetaffairs.com</a>	Department of Veterans Affairs
<a href="http://www.laworks.net">www.laworks.net</a>	Department of Labor (webpage and job site)

The official Louisiana state website [www.louisiana.gov](http://www.louisiana.gov) provides a link to executive departments as well as each affiliated state agency.

# Fraud warning

- Never give Social Security numbers, bank account numbers, or other financial information to anyone calling for this information. FEMA does not call victims to ask for financial information.
- Be cautious in dealings with people charging fees to be put on a list or to have forms filled out. Some scammers ask for upfront money to put you on a phony list, or demand fees to fill out the

disaster loan application.

- Refuse offers to falsely increase the amount of your disaster damages in return for favors or kickbacks.
- If you suspect fraud, contact the Department of Homeland Security Katrina/Rita Fraud Hotline, (866) 720-5721, or the Louisiana Office of Attorney General, Consumer Protection Section, (800) 351-4889.

## Register for FEMA Disaster Assistance

**1-800-621-3362**

**[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)**

**Even if you have  
received assistance  
from the American Red  
Cross, you should still  
register with FEMA for  
other disaster needs.**

### Small Business Disaster Relief Fund

The Louisiana Association of Business and Industry (LABI), with the assistance of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, established the Small Business Disaster Relief Fund. The Fund is an ongoing initiative that will provide grants to help small businesses damaged by Hurricane Katrina get back into business as soon as possible by providing "gap funding" to cover expenses not covered by insurance.

Applications may be downloaded from the LABI Web site, [www.labi.org](http://www.labi.org), or contact the LABI office at (225) 928-5388 to have the application faxed or mailed.

## Post Office Change of Address

If you need to change mail delivery to your current location, call the U.S. Postal Service at (800) 275-8777, or visit online at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com). Change of address forms are available at any Post Office.