



**State Emergency
Response Team**



FEMA

News Release

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FEMA INSPECTORS ASSESSING STORM DAMAGE TO VOLUSIA COUNTY HOMES

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Having your home inspected for storm damage is an important step in determining the type and amount of disaster assistance that may be available. For this reason, inspectors hired by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are going to homes and assessing the losses of Volusia County residents who've applied for federal assistance.

In the two weeks since the May 27 disaster declaration, 2,780 people with disaster-related housing damages have been contacted for inspection appointments. Of those, 2,700, or 95 percent, have already had their properties inspected for storm-related damages. Homeowners and renters usually receive a call and property damage inspection within days of applying.

Inspectors document property damage, but they do not determine the amount of aid an applicant may receive, nor do they provide estimates on damages. During inspections, an applicant or someone they authorize to represent them must be present to allow property access and to point out disaster-related damage.

Eligible applicants may receive federal disaster-assistance grants from FEMA and/or low interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Payments to individuals are made to cover uninsured or underinsured disaster-related expenses like emergency home repairs, temporary housing or assistance towards the replacement of a destroyed home; and for other serious unmet disaster-related expenses. Information about various disaster-assistance programs can be found online at www.fema.gov.

Understanding the Inspection Process

Before an inspector is assigned, homeowners or renters with disaster-related damage to their homes must register with FEMA. They can register and check the status of an application online at www.disasterassistance.gov, or by calling toll-free **800-621-3362 (FEMA)**, or **(TTY) 800-462-7585** for those with a speech- or hearing-impairment. Representatives are available 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. local time, seven days a week. Multilingual assistance is also available to applicants.

Damage Inspection is Free

- A FEMA inspector will attempt to contact an applicant by phone to schedule an appointment.

- It is critical to update FEMA with current contact information, including a phone number, and accurate directions to the damaged property. If an applicant is unable to return for the mandatory damage inspection, they may authorize someone else to be present in their place.
- A street address is required since post office boxes do not show locations.
- An inspector will try three times to schedule a damage inspection appointment. After that, delays may occur.
- Owners and renters must show proof of occupancy such as a utility bill or landlord statement.
- Owners must also show proof of ownership.
- Each inspection generally takes 30 to 40 minutes.

Be Alert for Disaster Fraud

FEMA inspectors carry official photo identification with their name and the words **“Under contract to FEMA”** printed on it. Residents should ask for this photo identification before allowing an inspector inside their home.

Official inspectors will never ask for money or use a vehicle bearing a FEMA logo. If money is requested for an inspection or an applicant feels someone is misrepresenting themselves as a FEMA inspector, this should be reported to local police.

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FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.

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

FEMA’s temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

The Florida Division of Emergency Management and State Emergency Response Team (SERT) coordinates disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation programs with all 67 counties and the federal government. For more information and to GET A PLAN! please visit www.FloridaDisaster.org.

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