



FEMA

# News Release

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## FEMA COMMUNITY RELATIONS TEAMS IN DISASTER AREA TO HELP

**DOWNER'S GROVE, Ill.** — Federal Community Relations field specialists are on the ground in disaster-designated counties, reaching out to residents with information on available disaster assistance programs.

President Obama approved a disaster declaration for Illinois Aug. 19 for severe storms and flooding occurring July 22 to Aug. 7. Residents of seven counties — Carroll, Cook, DuPage, Jo Daviess, Ogle, Stephenson and Winnebago — may apply to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for aid if they had damage due to the disaster.

**Those who have applied to other agencies or organizations must apply to FEMA directly to get disaster assistance. Apply online any time at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov), or telephone toll-free 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) (TTY 1-800-462-7585), 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. CDT.** For those who need it, help in applying is available at a Disaster Recovery Center.

Recovery assistance may include help to pay for temporary housing needs, essential home repairs and other serious, disaster-related expenses.

Community Relations staff are FEMA's "boots on the ground" to connect with disaster area residents, local organizations and emergency managers. Team members view first-hand problems the individuals are facing and relay information back to appropriate state or federal staff best able to respond.

FEMA field members also seek out special needs populations (seniors, people with disabilities, those who do not speak English, etc.) and provide referrals to community resources.

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*FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.*