



FEMA

Disaster News

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INSPECTORS WILL EXAMINE DAMAGED NEW HAMPSHIRE PROPERTY

NEWINGTON, N.H. - New Hampshire residents in disaster-declared counties who have sustained damages to their homes from the recent severe storms and flooding should expect inspectors to call if they have already applied for federal disaster assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Inspectors are now in affected areas examining damaged properties and will verify the nature and extent of the damage inflicted by the storm. FEMA schedules its inspections within three to five days of the time a residence or business owner registers by phone.

Those affected can begin the application process by calling FEMA's toll-free registration number **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or (TTY) 1-800-462-7585 for the hearing or speech impaired. The lines are open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week until further notice. Registration can also be done online at www.fema.gov.

What a homeowner should know:

- Once registered, an inspector may call and schedule an appointment to visit the damaged property, usually within 3-5 days, to determine eligibility for the Individuals and Households Program (IHP) to aid with disaster-related losses. Every effort should be made to be available for the scheduled visit.
- The inspection process can be expedited if certain documents are available to show the inspector, such as proof of ownership for property owners or proof of occupancy for renters. Insurance papers should be shown if possible.
- An inspector will determine the extent of damage to the house and whether it is livable by checking the structure and the systems. Damage to major appliances - washer, dryer, furnace, refrigerator, stove, etc., will be assessed. Other serious needs, such as lost or damaged clothing, also are reported.
- Homeowners and renters with private septic systems and wells should advise inspectors of the existence of these items. FEMA assistance may be available to repair or replace damaged systems.

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State and federal officials note that more than one agency may be inspecting damaged property. Other agencies that may be looking at damages include the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the American Red Cross, and/or local building officials.

“Inspectors are in the field to view damaged properties,” said FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officer Kenneth Clark. “It is an absolute priority for us to get aid to those who need it, and in order to expedite that, people must first register with FEMA, then undergo the inspection process to determine eligibility.”

Applicants should ask for proper identification before allowing unfamiliar persons claiming to be inspectors into their homes. “These inspectors will have specific agency identification showing that they are in fact authorized to do an inspection,” said Mike Poirier, state coordinating officer with the New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Management (BEM). “Also, official inspectors will not be charging any fees to perform this service. If someone tries to do that, they should be reported to the nearest law enforcement agency.”

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FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003 .

The N.H. Bureau of Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating the state's emergency response to major natural and man-made disasters. Editors: For more information visit www.fema.gov or www.nhoem.state.nh.us