

HUD and DHS Launch DisasterRecoveryWorkingGroup.gov to Solicit Public Comments



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Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan and Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today announced the launch of DisasterRecoveryWorkingGroup.gov—a new interagency website that will allow federal disaster recovery officials to solicit public comments from state, local and tribal partners and the public.

The new website will be used by the federal government's newly-formed Long Term Disaster Recovery Working Group—co-chaired by Secretary Donovan and Secretary Napolitano—to allow stakeholders to submit ideas for disaster recovery; articulate objectives for recovery assistance going forward; identify examples of best practices; raise challenges and obstacles to success; and share thoughts, experiences and lessons learned.

“It is vital to our success that disaster recovery professionals and stakeholders provide their input as we move forward to improve disaster recovery efforts across the country,” said Secretary Donovan. “This new website will give everyone involved in disaster recovery a voice in shaping how we respond, and then rebuild and revitalize communities in the wake of disaster.”

“Successful recovery relies on effective collaboration with partners from state, local and tribal governments and the private sector,” said Secretary Napolitano. “This new website will support the federal government's efforts to enhance our nation's resiliency in the face of emergencies by engaging directly with our stakeholders.”

Last month, President Obama asked Secretaries Napolitano and Donovan to co-chair the Long Term Disaster Recovery Working Group, comprised of more than 20 federal departments, agencies and offices, to ensure that individuals, communities and the nation's economy can withstand and rapidly recover from disasters. In order to develop a better national strategy for an effective approach to long-term disaster recovery, the Working Group will:

- Provide operational guidance for Federal, State, Tribal and local authorities to provide for effective and unified disaster recovery. This includes defining roles and responsibilities, detailing recovery management and operational coordination, articulating communications strategies and establishing measurements for success;
- Review disaster recovery programs and the framework of disaster recovery, and identify gaps as well as overlapping and/or conflicting sources of authority for disaster recovery efforts;
- Examine areas for improved interagency planning and collaboration among federal agencies;
- Examine methods to build capacity within State, local and tribal governments as well as within the nonprofit, faith-based, and private sectors; both in recovery operations and in pre-disaster recovery planning; and
- Examine successful practices and lessons learned during previous disaster recovery efforts, with particular attention to catastrophic disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

In addition, Secretaries Donovan and Napolitano will provide the President with recommendations to improve long-term catastrophic disaster recovery and help develop a National Disaster Recovery Framework that will provide detailed operational guidance to recovery organizations under existing authorities.

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