



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
October 24, 2007

Statement on Federal Disaster Assistance for California

The President today declared a major disaster exists in the State of California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by wildfires beginning on October 21, 2007, and continuing.



The President's action makes Federal funding available to affected individuals in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

Federal funding also is available to State and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara, and Ventura for debris removal and emergency protective measures.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

R. David Paulison, Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security, named Michael J. Hall as the Federal Coordinating Officer for Federal recovery operations in the affected area.

FEMA said that damage surveys have been requested and will be conducted as soon as the situation permits.

FEMA said that those who sustained losses in the counties designated for aid to affected individuals and business owners can begin applying for assistance tomorrow by registering online at <http://www.fema.gov> or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA(3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (local time) Monday thru Sunday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: FEMA (202) 646-4600.

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