Skagit County Emergency Management

Registering for FEMA assistance

What Information do I Need to Apply?

Whether applying online (www.disasterassistance.gov) OR over the phone 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), you should have a pen and paper and the following information ready:

- Your Social Security number.
- Current and pre-disaster address.
- A telephone number where you can be contacted.
- Insurance information.
- Total household annual income
- A routing and account number from your bank (only necessary if you want to have disaster assistance funds transferred directly into your bank account)
- A description of your losses that were caused by the disaster.

(The speech or hearing impaired may call (TTY) 1-800-462-7585)

After you've completed your application for assistance, you will receive a FEMA application number. **Write down this number and keep it for future reference.**

Note: FEMA verifies the name and social security number of those registering for disaster assistance. If the name and social security number on file with the social security administration does not match the information you provide you will be asked to submit a copy of an original document, e.g. marriage license, military ID, tax documents, etc., for proof of identity. A need to review and update identity documentation may cause delays in delivery of assistance.

Registering on-line (**www.disasterassistance.gov**) and having technical difficulties? Call
1 (800) 745-0243
1 (800) 745-0243 (TTY users please contact your TRS to connect you.)
For more information on the process and frequently asked questions, visit the following website on line:

http://www.fema.gov/assistance/index.shtm

After 24 hours you will be able to check the status of your application using one of the methods below.

Online:	Log in to the DisasterAssistance.gov site
By Phone:	Call: 1 (800) 621-FEMA (3362). Speech or hearing disability? 1 (800) 462-7585 TTY
In Person:	Visit a Disaster Recovery Center

Please Note:
If you do not wait 24 hours you may not see your registration. This does not mean you are not registered. It may simply mean that your registration has not been processed yet. Registering more than once will result in a delay of your application.

Okay, I'm registered, what next?

1. FEMA will mail you a copy of
   - your application
   - an applicants guide that will answer many of your questions "Help After a Disaster: Applicant's Guide to the Individuals and Households Program"

2. An inspector will contact you.
   - What happens at the inspection?
   - What happens after the inspection?

3. You may need to complete additional forms.

Declaration and Release Form (Need to provide to the inspector)	o Verifies that a member of the household is a citizen, non-citizen national or qualified alien of the United States. (PDF 36 KB, TXT 6KB)

If You Received Assistance

- [What Can I Spend the Money On?](#)
- [I've been told I need to repay some of the money I was given, how do I do that?](#)

If You Were Denied Assistance

- [Why am I not Eligible for assistance?](#)
- [I Want to Have My Case Reviewed Again](#)

What Happens at the Inspection?

If you do NOT have insurance	- Wait 10-14 days after you apply. - An inspector will contact you to schedule a time to review your damaged home.
If you have insurance	- File your insurance claim first. - Provide FEMA with a decision letter (settlement or denial) from your insurance company - An inspector will contact you to schedule a time to review your damaged home.
If you have flood insurance	- File your insurance claim. - An inspector will contact you to schedule a time to review your damaged home. You do NOT need to provide a copy of your flood insurance decision letter to us before FEMA will schedule an inspection. Since temporary living expenses are not covered by flood insurance, an inspection will be scheduled after you apply for assistance.

What happens during the inspection?

1. An inspector will schedule a time to meet you at your damaged home. Please Note:

   o   In areas where access is still severely limited, it may take longer for an inspection.

   o   Inspectors are contractors, not FEMA employees, but your inspector will have FEMA identification.

   o   Inspectors file your report but do not determine your eligibility.

   o   There is no fee for the inspection.

2. The inspector will visit your property to assess the damage related to the disaster. During the inspection:

   o   You must be present for your scheduled appointment and provide [proof of ownership and occupancy](#) to the inspector.

   o   If you cannot be present, you may designate someone (over the age of 18) to meet the inspector on your behalf. You may be asked to sign a form authorizing this individual to meet the inspector.

3. After the inspection, you will be asked to sign a form authorizing FEMA to verify that the information you have given is correct.

Applying for Assistance Online

How do I apply for Disaster Assistance?
FEMA offers two ways to apply for disaster assistance. The newest is to apply on-line through the DisasterAssistance.gov website - Register for Assistance. The traditional way is to call FEMA, 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) and register over the phone or TTY 1-800-462-7585 for the speech and hearing impaired.

What are the hardware (system) and software requirements for accessing and filing a disaster registration?
A computer that has access to the Internet and FireFox 1.0, Netscape 8.0, AOL 9.0, Safari, and Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 as its Web browser should work efficiently with the FEMA Internet RI system.

We further recommend a minimum Pentium III and 128 mb of Ram for IE 6.0, with an actual minimum requirement of a 486/66 MHZ processor, Windows 98, Windows ME, Windows NT 4.0, Windows 2000, or Windows XP.

In addition, for Win 98 we suggest 16 MB of RAM, Windows ME 32 MB of RAM, Win NT 32 MB of RAM, Win 2000 32 MB of RAM, and Win XP 32 MB or RAM.

For monitors, we recommend a Super VGA (800 X 600) or higher resolution monitor with 256 colors.

If I do not have a computer at home, how can I apply using the Internet?
You can apply online from any computer that uses Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 for access to the internet. If you don't have a home computer, you can check with your local library, community center, or family/friends for an available computer to access the internet.

Does the registration software have a time-out feature?
Yes. The registration software will time-out after 45 minutes of no activity. If you "time-out" during the registration process, your registration will not be saved. If this happens you have three options:

1. When your connectivity is restored, begin your registration again,
2. Call the FEMA Technical Helpdesk at 1-800-745-0243,
3. Call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) and complete a registration over the phone.

What if I lose my internet connection during the registration process?
There are two options available if you lose your internet connection during the registration process:

1. If your registration did not complete, when your internet connection becomes available, start the registration over and reenter the information,
2. Call the FEMA Technical Helpdesk at 1-800-745-0243,

3. Call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) to complete your registration over the phone.

Where can I obtain technical assistance for filling out the registration?
If you need technical assistance completing the FEMA Internet Registration, you can call the FEMA Technical Helpdesk toll-free number: 1-800 745-0243. This line availability corresponds with the [hours for teleregistration](#).

If I register more than once for a specific disaster will it delay the processing of my registration?
Yes, registering more than once for a specific disaster will delay the processing of your registration because duplicates must be reconciled before processing is initiated.

Can I print the electronic registration form, complete it, and mail it to FEMA?
No. We do not accept any registrations through the mail.

Can I print a copy of my completed registration?
No. A copy of your completed registration will be sent to you through the mail within two weeks along with a pamphlet titled, "[Help After a Disaster, Applicant's Guide to the Individuals and Households Program](#)". This pamphlet should answer many of the questions you may have regarding FEMA's program.

How will I know if my electronic registration was received?
At the end of the registration process, you will receive a confirmation screen informing you that your registration is complete, along with a 9 digit registration ID number. Within two weeks you will receive through the mail a copy of your registration, and a pamphlet titled, "[Help After a Disaster, Applicant's Guide to the Individuals and Households Program](#)".

When will I hear about the status of my registration and whether or not I'm eligible for assistance?
Within two weeks of submitting your registration to FEMA, you will receive by mail a copy, along with a pamphlet titled, "[Help After a Disaster, Applicant's Guide to the Individuals and Households Program](#)". This pamphlet should answer many of the questions you may have regarding FEMA's program.

If your registration is issued to an inspector to evaluate your damages, an inspector will be in contact with you within seven to fourteen days of registering. Following the inspection, you will receive a letter in the mail advising you of your eligibility. If you are eligible for assistance, you will receive the eligible amount either through the mail by check, or through direct deposit into your checking or savings account, depending on how you responded to the Electronic Funds Transfer question during registration.

How do I update my application with my new phone number or personal information?
Call the FEMA Disaster Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) (hearing/speech impaired ONLY-call TTY: 1-800-462-7585), or visit a Disaster Recovery Center.

What if I forget my registration number?
Your Registration ID Number is displayed on all correspondence sent to you by FEMA. However, if you are corresponding with FEMA and cannot find your number, you can call the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362).

Creating an Account

Do I have to register on-line to be able to create an account and access my personal application information through the internet?
No. To set-up account access go to the Online Individual Assistance Center, Select "Review your Application", then select "Create My Account"

May a FEMA representative create my personal account access for me?
No,a user must establish their own account. If you have difficulty setting-up your Account Access call the Technical Assistance Desk at 1-800-745-0243.

How can I create my personal account to access my FEMA application(s) on-line?
From the "Conclusion" screen of the on-line disaster assistance registration click "Create Account" or * Go click on "Register Online", Select "Review your Application", then select "Create My Account"

I changed my e-mail address since I registered for disaster assistance. Can I use a different e-mail address to create my personal access account?
Yes. When you create your personal account access your PIN will be sent to the email address you identify on your access account creation.

What information is needed to create my personal account access?

- Title (Mr/Ms)
- First and last name
- Address
- Contact phone number
- Email address
- Date of birth
- Mother's maiden name
- Social Security Number

(Note: To access your FEMA application, the name, address, and personal information must be the same as that used to register for disaster assistance.)

Is "Organization" a required field? What does it mean?
It is not a required field and should be ignored by individuals registering to access their personal account information. The assistance center is also used by groups that are applying for other FEMA programs. This field provides a location for the user to identify the organization they represent.

Is an e-mail address required to Create My Account Access?
Yes. You must have an email address to create your account access. Your e-mail address is the only way a PIN can be sent to you; the PIN is required to access your personal account. You may wish to consider creating an email address through one of the numerous public providers.

When I got to the end of my registration a message said I had not completed entries in certain fields; I followed the instructions and edited the required fields; do I have to go through every screen again to get to the end of my registration?
No. You must click on the "NEXT" button to retain your entries; this will take you to the next screen. From there use your "Mouse" and click on the "Income" tab at the top of your screen, this takes you to the last screen in the registration; click "NEXT" to complete the registration process.

How is a PIN created?
The PIN is a four character computer-generated item that is created and sent to the e-mail address provided when you created your application access account.

How do I get a PIN and how long will it take?
Your PIN is sent when you register for access to your Personal Account or when you change your Password. You should receive your PIN at the email address listed on your account creation within 24 hours.

Updating Your Personal Information

Can I update my information through my personal access account?
You can save time and do many of the same things online that you can do over the phone, including:

* Check the status of your case
* View and update your Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) information
* View and update your address and phone number(s)
* View your insurance type(s) and policy number(s)
* View letters and information requests sent to you
* Verify letters and information requests sent to you
* View letters that you have sent to FEMA
* View agency referrals
* Get updates on the status of inspections being conducted by FEMA

My e-mail address has changed. Do I need to update my personal account access? How?
This is your choice. The email address identified when the account was created is used any time you update or forget your User ID, Password, or Pin. To change your email address a new Access Account will need to be created.

Accessing Your Information

Can I access my FEMA application information through the internet?
Yes. Go to the DisasterAssistance.gov website. From this site you will be able to: *
Register for Assistance * Access your personal account information

Why do I have to wait 24-hours from the time I receive my PIN to access my account information?
You are asked to wait 24-hours to ensure sufficient time for all your application information to become viewable in the Individual Assistance Center.

Once I have a PIN, what additional information is needed to access my file?
To access your personal account information you will need: * your Username (User ID) *Password * PIN *Social Security Number

Can anybody access my internet personal account?
No. To access your personal account the user would need your User ID, Password, and PIN. The only way anyone else would have this information is if you provide it to them. FEMA will never contact you and ask for your User ID, Password, or PIN and strongly recommends they not be shared.

What do I do if I forget my username, password, or PIN?
Go to www.DisasterAssistance.gov, click on the "Start Registration," select "Review your Application", then select "Request Password or PIN" or "Request Username".

I created my account but can't access my personal information, what should I do?
It may take up to 24 hours before your account access is available. If it has been more than 24 hours since you received their PIN, Go to "Apply for Assistance Online ", click on the "Register Online," select "Review your Application", then select "Request Password or PIN". If the problem continues contact the Technical Assistance Desk at 1-800-745-0243.

Does the registration or file access have a time-out feature?
Yes. It will time-out after 45 minutes of no activity. Entries made before the system "time-out" will not be saved. When your connectivity is restored, you will need to re-enter your information.

What information can I see through my personal account access?
You will be able to see your * Eligibility status by category * Payment schedule date and amount of eligible assistance (if applicable) * Addresses and phone numbers currently in your file * Insurance types, policy numbers * Contact numbers on record * Information requested from you by FEMA * Correspondence received from you (the document itself will not be viewable) * Correspondence sent to you by FEMA (the document itself will not be viewable) * Agency referrals (all agency referrals for the disaster will be viewable) * the Status of any inspections conducted by FEMA (details of the inspection are not viewable)

Can I view or print a copy of letters sent to or from FEMA?
No. At this time you can not view or print a copy of letters from FEMA or any responses you may have provided.

I don't understand the information on these pages, is there any help available offering further explanations?
Yes. When Registering for assistance Help scripts are available by clicking on the field title. When viewing information about your personal account a Help script is available in the upper left corner of each screen. Some field descriptions are also available.

I was previously assisted by FEMA. Can I view information in all the disasters I've applied?
No. Online information is only available for disasters declared after November 1, 2002. If you need information from your file for a disaster declared prior to November 1, 2002 you should contact FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA(3362) or TTY 1-800-462-7585.

Error Messages

I received an error message stating "Image Identification Failed", what should I do?
Re-establish your connection and try again.

I received a message stating my credentials were not valid, what does this mean?
This message means you made an error when entering your User ID, Password, or PIN. Re-enter the information and try again Remember the login fields are case sensitive.

I received an error message stating "Your identity cannot be verified", what should I do?
The system was unable to verify your information. You will not be able to access your personal account information over the internet. For information about your disaster assistance application call the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362).

I tried to set-up access to my personal account information but received an error message stating I "did not pass quiz". What does this mean and what should I do?
This message means your response to the question asked did not match information on record. You can re-establish your connection and try again or call the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) for information about your case.

What do I do if I get a different error message?
Follow the instructions provided. If the instructions fail, contact the Technical Assistance Desk at 1-800-745-0243 for help.