



FEMA

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News Release

FEMA Housing Inspectors Visiting Georgia Counties Damaged by Hurricane Matthew

ATLANTA – FEMA housing inspectors are visiting neighborhoods flooded by Hurricane Matthew, checking for damage in the seven counties that are eligible to apply for federal disaster assistance.

Housing inspections are free but only homes of disaster survivors who have already registered with FEMA in **Bryan, Bulloch, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, McIntosh** and **Wayne counties** will be inspected.

Survivors are encouraged to register with FEMA and provide their current contact information before coordinating with the housing inspector to schedule the inspection. Inspectors do not determine an applicant's eligibility for assistance.

When they arrive at a home, they will display official contractor photo identification. If the photo ID is not visible, it is important to ask to see it. This helps prevent fraud.

The job of FEMA's contracted housing inspectors is to verify disaster damage; they do not need to document **all** damage. They look for damage to the structure and building systems, to major appliances, septic systems and wells, and they enter the information electronically into FEMA computers.

An inspection generally requires 15-30 minutes to complete. To speed the process, applicants should:

- Ensure the house number or mailbox number is clearly visible from the road.
- Keep their appointment or notify the inspector if a postponement is necessary.
- Ask a member of the household who is 18 or older to be present to complete the inspection.
- Be reachable, informing neighbors where they can be contacted if the home is uninhabitable.
- Tell the inspector about other property losses or disaster-related needs such as transportation, medical or dental care, tools needed for a trade if not self-employed and educational materials so inspectors can relay the information to FEMA.
- If possible, provide damage photos that can supplement the images taken by the inspector.

(MORE)

FEMA Housing Inspectors Visiting Georgia Counties Damaged by Hurricane Matthew – Page 2

What to expect from inspectors:

- They have each applicant's nine-digit registration number and will never ask for it.
- They never require banking or other personal information.
- They do not hire or endorse specific contractors to repair homes or recommend repairs.

Homeowners are asked to show proof of ownership such as a tax bill, deed, mortgage payment receipt or insurance policy with the property's address. Renters must show proof of occupancy, a lease, rent payment receipt, utility bill or another document confirming the location was their primary residence at the time of the disaster. Both homeowners and renters must provide a valid driver's license or other photo identification.

Disaster survivors with communication-related disabilities—those who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or have vision loss and those with speech difficulties—may request accommodations to aid in communication. For instance, survivors may request an American Sign Language interpreter.

For updates on Georgia's Hurricane Matthew response and recovery, follow @GeorgiaEMA and @FEMARegion4 on Twitter and visit gemhsa.ga.gov and fema.gov/disaster/4284.

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.

Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.

FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.

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