



FEMA

Joint Information Center Disaster News



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Temporary Housing Provides Short-Term Solution for Those Displaced by Hurricane Isabel

RICHMOND, VA – To meet the needs of Virginia residents who have been displaced from their homes as a result of losses and damages following Hurricane Isabel, efforts are now underway to provide temporary housing options, which may include the use of manufactured housing and travel trailers.

“Providing safe and adequate temporary housing for people who are displaced while they work toward permanent long-term housing solutions is a major concern for state and federal officials,” said David Fukutomi, Federal Coordinating Officer for the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

For some homeowners, funds for minimal repairs may be obtained through federal grants to make their residence safe, sanitary and functional. FEMA can provide assistance in the form of grants to help families temporarily relocate to alternative housing such as apartment, home, or condominium rentals. When other alternative temporary housing options are exhausted, travel trailers and manufactured housing are considered.

“Travel trailers and manufactured housing are considered when other resources are not adequate or available,” Fukutomi said. FEMA teams have been assessing available rental resources in disaster-designated jurisdictions. “This is not an overnight process. It will take close cooperation between local officials, state and FEMA to make sure the operation runs as efficiently as possible, with everyone knowing their responsibilities and roles,” he added.

Options for placement of travel trailers and manufactured homes include private sites and commercial parks. An additional option for manufactured homes would be sites constructed by the state and FEMA. Any of these options are contingent upon obtaining permission and permits from local governments.

FEMA’s responsibilities in this process will include working with applicants who need temporary housing because their home is unlivable. People start this registration process by first calling FEMA’s toll-free registration line at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362).

The travel trailers and manufactured homes will be provided by FEMA. The agency will install the units at the appropriate sites; make them ready for habitation; lease applicants in; provide maintenance and remove the unit when it is no longer needed. FEMA will also follow the progress of each case toward completion of a permanent housing plan.

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The state's responsibilities include initial coordination with local governments on community impact and severity of housing needs; transportation of units if limitations occur while they are being moved.

Local governments will be responsible for facilitating permit or ordinance processes and to ensure that adequate utilities are available.

Applicants who qualify for this program will be responsible to pay all utilities and actively pursue a permanent housing plan while occupying a unit. Progress will be monitored on a regular basis.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages Citizen Corps, the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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More disaster information is available on the Internet at www.fema.gov or SBA information at www.sba.gov. Information is also available through the FEMA 24-hour fax-on-demand service by calling 202-646-FEMA. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management also has an Internet site at www.vaemergency.com. Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, sex religion, national origin, age disability or economic status. Anyone who believes he or she has been discriminated against should contact the federal or state coordinating officer.