



**FEMA**

# News Release

Oct. 7, 2010  
FEMA 1935-DR-IL-NR034  
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## **FEMA ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE COLUMBUS DAY AND AFTER**

**DOWNERS GROVE, Ill.** – Disasters don't take a holiday and neither will the staff at the Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) operating in Freeport, Cicero, Westchester, Chicago State University and the Austin area of Chicago. The centers will be open Monday through Saturday, **including Columbus Day**, from **9 a.m. to 7 p.m.**, until further notice.

Online application services are available 24/7 at **[www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov)**, or call **1-800-621-3362**. TTY users call **1-800-462-7585**. Phone lines are open **7 a.m. to 10 p.m.** every day of the week, **including Columbus Day**.

DRCs are operated jointly by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). More than 13,000 residents have visited a DRC as of Oct. 6. They find information there on:

- FEMA and State disaster assistance programs
- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest disaster loans and how to complete a loan application, including one-on-one help with the forms
- Cost-effective, smart building techniques to reduce damage from future floods
- Flood insurance

**Applying is the first step toward disaster recovery.** Individuals can apply online any day of the week at **[www.DisasterAssistance.gov](http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov)** or call **1-800-621-3362** from **7 a.m. to 10 p.m.** daily. TTY users may call **1-800-462-7585**. Phone assistance is available in many languages.

Centers are at the following locations:

**Chicago State University, Emil and Patricia Jones Convocation Center  
9501 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, Chicago, IL 60628  
(Campus car access at South Dr. Martin Luther King Drive and East 99<sup>th</sup> Place)**

**Stephenson County Highway Administration Building, 295 West Lamm Road  
Freeport, IL 61032 (near County Road 12/South Walnut Avenue)**

**Cicero Public Safety Building, 5410 West 34<sup>th</sup> St., Cicero, IL 60804**

**MORE**

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**St. Joseph High School, 1840 Mayfair Ave., Westchester, IL 60154  
(West entrance via Oxford Street)**

**Austin Area (Former Old Navy building), Washington Square  
4905 West North Ave., Chicago, IL 60639**

Completing the SBA application is an essential part of the process of applying for FEMA disaster grants. Homeowners and renters who cannot afford a loan may be referred back to FEMA for possible additional grant assistance. Applicants are not required to take out a loan if one is offered to them.

SBA disaster loan information may be obtained by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at **1-800-659-2955** or **TTY 1-800-877-8339** Monday through Friday from **7 a.m. to 5 p.m.** or by e-mailing to [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). Apply online at SBA's secure website at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>. For more information about the SBA disaster loan program, visit the SBA website at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

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*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.*