

January 10, 2017
FEMA-4293-DR NR012
State News Desk: (615) 741-0430
FEMA News Desk: (540) 247-6480

News Release

Maximize Federal Assistance by Completing SBA Loan Application

SEVIERVILLE, Tenn. — Disaster survivors who were affected by the Sevier County wildfires and were referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration could lose some income-based FEMA grants if they don't complete and submit SBA's loan application.

FEMA's Other Needs Assistance grants may cover uninsured losses for furniture, appliances and other essential personal property, even vehicles. Survivors will not be considered for this type of assistance unless they complete and return the SBA loan application. The information on the application is used to determine eligibility for income-based assistance.

Disaster survivors who were affected by the Nov. 28 to Dec. 9 wildfires in Sevier County are encouraged to register with FEMA and, if referred, complete and submit an SBA loan application, even if they don't want a loan. Survivors should start the loan process as soon as possible.

SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. The SBA offers low-interest disaster loans to businesses, private nonprofit organizations, homeowners and renters.

Those who qualify for an SBA loan are under no obligation to accept it. If approved and the loan is not accepted, the survivor may be ineligible for additional federal assistance.

Insurance is a property owner's first line of defense. FEMA grants may be available to cover uninsured or underinsured losses.

Survivors should submit an SBA loan application even if they are waiting for an insurance settlement. A survivor's insurance policy may not cover all the replacement, repair and rebuilding costs. A disaster loan is available to cover the difference.

To repair or help rebuild a primary residence, a homeowner may borrow up to \$200,000 from SBA. Homeowners and renters may borrow up to \$40,000 from SBA to replace personal property.

Businesses may borrow up to \$2 million for any combination of property damage or economic injury. SBA offers low-interest working capital loans (called Economic Injury Disaster Loans) to small

businesses and most private nonprofit organizations of all sizes having difficulty meeting obligations as a result of the disaster.

Survivors of the Sevier County wildfires can register with FEMA the following ways:

- Online at DisasterAssistance.gov (also in Spanish).
- Download [the FEMA mobile app](#) (also in Spanish).
- Call the FEMA Helpline at **800-621-3362 (FEMA)**. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a **TTY** may call **800-462-7585**. Toll-free numbers are open daily from **7 a.m. to 10 p.m.**
- Help is available in most languages.

The filing deadline to return SBA loan applications for physical property damage is **Feb. 13**. The deadline to return economic injury applications is **Sept. 15**.

For more information about SBA loans, call SBA's disaster assistance customer service center at **800-659-2955**, email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov or visit sba.gov/disaster. **TTY** users can call **800-877-8339**. Applicants may also apply online using the electronic loan application via SBA's secure website at disasterloan.sba.gov/ela.

SBA customer service representatives are also available to answer questions, help complete loan applications and close loans at a business recovery center that opened Jan. 9 in Gatlinburg.

Sevier County

Location: Citizens National Bank Building
(Former United Way Office)
906 East Parkway
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

Hours: Monday through Friday: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturdays and Sundays: Closed.

For updates on Tennessee's wildfire response and recovery, follow [@FEMARegion4](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion4) on Twitter and visit TNEMA.org/, MountainTough.org/ and fema.gov/disaster/4293.

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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.