



FEMA

President Declares Major Disaster for Puerto Rico

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WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced that federal aid has been made available to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico to supplement commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Irene beginning on August 21, 2011, and continuing.

The President's action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in the municipalities of Caguas, Canóvanas, Carolina, Cayey, Loíza, Luquillo, and San Juan.

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

Federal funding also is available to commonwealth and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by Hurricane Irene in the municipalities of Aguas Buenas, Carolina, Cayey, Ceiba, Comerío, Juncos, Las Marías, Luquillo, Morovis, Naguabo, Orocovis, Utuado, Vega Baja, and Villalba.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures for the entire commonwealth.

Justo Hernández has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area. Hernández said that damage surveys are continuing in other areas, and additional municipalities may be designated for assistance after the assessments are fully completed.

Residents and business owners who sustained losses in the designated municipalities can begin applying for assistance tomorrow by registering online at <http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov> or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA(3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice.

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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.

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