



DISASTER NEWS

Loans for Homeowners, Renters and Businesses of All Sizes

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Contact: Richard Jenkins

Phone: (916) 735-1500

SBA RESPONSE TO HURRICANE GUSTAV

SACRAMENTO – Rear Admiral Steven Smith USN (Ret.), Chief of the Executive Office of the U. S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) office of Disaster Strategic Planning and Operations, announced today that SBA’s response to help businesses recover from Hurricane Gustav is well underway. So far, SBA has deployed more than 125 people to Louisiana to help residents and businesses recover from the hurricane.

“To underscore SBA’s commitment to helping homeowners, renters, non-profits and businesses of all sizes, and to facilitate the rapid recovery of Louisiana’s business community, Alfred E. Judd, Director of SBA’s Field Operations Center - West, was in Louisiana today to provide an overview of SBA’s response to State and local officials. Meeting with Governor Bobby Jindal and U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Steve Preston, Judd discussed SBA’s capabilities and unique role in both immediate and long term recovery efforts. Judd also met with Fran Gladden, Undersecretary for Louisiana’s Economic Development Department (LED), to form a partnership in making sure Louisiana’s business community’s needs are addressed.

“As a result of those meetings, we are pleased to announce that SBA will make available customer service representatives in five Business Assistance Centers that LED will establish in the coming days,” Smith said. “Our representatives will be available to issue loan applications, answer questions about SBA’s disaster loan program, explain the application process and help each business owner complete their application,” he continued

“In addition, this weekend, SBA will provide support to the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce (BRACC) at two workshops. Businesses and private non-profit organizations will have access to computers provided by the Louisiana Technology Park and the BRACC to go online to apply for SBA’s assistance,” Smith said. SBA customer service representatives will be available at these workshops to answer questions and assist businesses with the online application process. The SBA’s Electronic Loan Application was implemented only last month and this is the first time it will be used in a group workshop. Business owners will also be able to receive one-on-one help in submitting a paper application.

The workshops will take place at the **Louisiana Technology Park in the Computer Training Center at 7117 Florida Boulevard in Baton Rouge on Saturday, September 6 from 10 am to 2 pm** and on **Sunday, September 7 from 1 pm to 4 pm.**

According to Smith, beginning Tuesday, September 9, SBA will conduct three training sessions for Louisiana Small Business Development Center (LSBDC) counselors. These counselors will receive intensive training on the SBA Disaster Loan program, the 2008 SBA Disaster Loan Improvements Act, and how to apply using SBA’s new Electronic Loan Application.

SBA has people in Louisiana ready to meet with homeowners, renters and business owners at every Disaster Recovery Center once they begin to open. Public Information Officers are meeting with many Community organizations and Federal, state and local officials to keep them informed of SBA’s response and where and how to get help. Additionally, counselors at SBA’s Customer Assistance Center are available at 1-800-659-2955 to

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answer questions. The CSC has extended their hours and services in response to Gustav and counselors are available seven days a week. The CSC is open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 9 pm est. and Saturday and Sunday from 9 am to 6 pm EST.

“SBA Acting Administrator Sandy K. Baruah is committed to providing every resource we need to get the job done. This intensive effort will result in a timely and effective response for the citizens of Louisiana,” Smith said.

Businesses of all sizes and private, non-profit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets. For small businesses and most private, non-profit organizations, SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. EIDL assistance is available regardless of whether the business or non-profit suffered any property damage. Small businesses experiencing protracted power outages and who don't have any property damage but are suffering financial losses due to those outages are encouraged to apply.

SBA also makes federal disaster loans to homeowners and renters. Homeowners may borrow up to \$200,000 to repair their real estate. Homeowners and renters may borrow up to \$40,000 to repair or replace personal property losses.

Individuals and business may obtain information by calling toll-free (800) 659-2955 or by emailing us at disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Hearing impaired individuals may call toll-free (800) 877-8339 or visit SBA's website at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance. Additionally, disaster victims may now go online to file an SBA application for disaster loan assistance. The Electronic Loan Application (ELA) is accessible via SBA's secure Web site at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.