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Recovery News

TRANSITIONAL SHELTERING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EXTENDED TO JANUARY 8

AUSTIN, Texas - The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), at the request of the state of Texas, has extended its Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) initiative for 30 days, to January 8, for eligible Texas wildfire survivors in six counties.

The TSA program, available in Bastrop, Cass, Marion, Montgomery, Travis and Waller counties, provides short-term hotel/motel stays for eligible Texans whose homes or apartments were severely damaged or destroyed in the fires. Since it took effect Sept. 9, the program has assisted more than 400 wildfire survivors and their families.

Individual Assistance specialists have contacted each TSA participant, providing them up to nine rental resources in their area. FEMA explores every reasonable means of locating rental resources in and around wildfire-affected areas, including the Internet, classified ads, local housing authorities and public-sector property management offices.

In addition, FEMA Community Relations specialists visited hotels occupied by TSA participants to spread the word about a free, one-on-one disaster case management program, which pairs survivors with a case manager whose sole job is to help them through the recovery process.

"FEMA continues to work diligently with its state and local partners to help participants to plan and secure more permanent housing options," said Federal Coordinating Officer Kevin L. Hannes. "TSA is meant to be a temporary solution, and with this second extension comes the final push to ensure wildfire survivors and their families have a real place to call home for the holidays."

Participants' continued eligibility for TSA is re-evaluated regularly, so the program could end earlier for some.

Texans affected by the wildfires can still apply for federal disaster assistance. Homeowners, renters, and business owners can register online at www.disasterassistance.gov, via web-enabled

phone at m.fema.gov, or by telephone via FEMA's toll-free numbers: 1-800-621-3362 or TTY 1-800-462-7585. Those who use 711-Relay or Video Relay Services can call 1-800-621-3362. Assistants are available by phone from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week.

Follow FEMA tweets about the Texas disaster at www.twitter.com/femaregion6. Other online resources are <http://blog.fema.gov>, www.facebook.com/fema and www.youtube.com/fema.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-3362. For TTY call 800-462-7585.

The mission of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, Texas Department of Public Safety, is to support the citizens of Texas and local jurisdictions as they plan for, respond to, recover from and mitigate the impacts of all hazards, emergencies and disasters. For more information, see: www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem.

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. Follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/femaregion6>, the R6 Hurricane Preparedness website at www.fema.gov/about/regions/regionvi/updates.shtm and the FEMA Blog at <http://blog.fema.gov>.