

October 13, 2011
Joint Field Office: Neptune, NJ
DR-4021-NJ NR-053
FEMA News Desk: 732-918-4431
State: 609-963-6818
SBA: 404-387-8670

Recovery News

DISASTER CRISIS COUNSELING AVAILABLE TO NEW JERSEY RESIDENTS

NEPTUNE, N.J. – Hurricane Irene did much more than destroy homes, businesses and public infrastructure; it also left many New Jersey residents traumatized. A federal grant is being provided to the New Jersey Department of Human Services for disaster crisis counseling, making it available to affected residents registered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Disaster-related stress can surface in many forms and often appears weeks or months after a traumatic event. It may include anger, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression, inability to concentrate, hyperactivity and/or increased alcohol or drug use.

“Losing a home, business or personal property takes not only a financial toll on survivors, but also leaves an emotional impact,” said Lt. Paul Miller, state coordinating officer with the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management. “Crisis counseling helps survivors understand their reactions, improve coping strategies, review their options, and connect with other individuals and agencies that may assist them.”

Survivors who are having difficulty managing the stress of the disaster can now get help by making a free phone call to the New Jersey crisis counseling helpline: 1-877-294-4357 (HELP) or TTY (1-877-294-4356) for people with hearing disabilities. Additional information on how to access mental health services is available on line at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhs/disaster/>

Registering with FEMA is an important first step in the recovery process. There are three ways to register – go to www.DisasterAssistance.gov, to m.fema.gov or call FEMA toll-free, **800-621-3362 (FEMA)**. Those with access or functional needs and who use a TTY may call 800-462-7585 or use 711 or Video Relay Service to call 800-621-3362. Telephone lines are open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. ET; multilingual operators are available.

The program, Project Recover, is overseen by the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Disaster and Terrorism Branch.

###

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 FEMA online at <http://blog.fema.gov>, www.twitter.com/fema, www.facebook.com/fema, and www.youtube.com/fema. Also, follow FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate's activities at www.twitter.com/craigatfema.