



U.S. Small Business Administration

DISASTER NEWS

Loans for Homeowners, Renters and Businesses of All Sizes

SBA Disaster Assistance – Field Operations Center- East – 101 Marietta Street, NW, Suite 700, Atlanta, GA 30303

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SBA Offers Disaster Assistance to Puerto Rico Residents Affected by Severe Storms, Flooding and Mudslides

WASHINGTON – Residents and businesses affected by severe storms, flooding and mudslides that occurred in Puerto Rico from Oct. 4 - 8, 2010, can apply for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration, SBA Administrator Karen G. Mills announced today.

Mills made the loans available in response to a letter from the authorized representative for Puerto Rico, Marcos Rodriguez Ema on Oct. 22, requesting a disaster declaration by the SBA. The declaration covers Patillas, Ponce, Salinas, Utuado, Yauco and the adjacent municipalities of Adjuntas, Aibonito, Arecibo, Arroyo, Cayey, Ciales, Coamo, Guanica, Guayama, Guayanilla, Hatillo, Jayuya, Juana Diaz, Lares, Maricao, Maunabo, Penuelas, Sabana Grande, San Lorenzo, Santa Isabel and Yabucoa in Puerto Rico.

“The SBA is strongly committed to providing the people of Puerto Rico with the most effective and customer-focused response possible to assist homeowners, renters, and businesses of all sizes with federal disaster loans,” said Administrator Mills. “Getting businesses and communities up and running after a disaster is our highest priority at SBA.”

“Loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for loans up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property,” said Frank Skaggs, director of SBA’s Field Operations Center East in Atlanta.

“Businesses and non-profit organizations of any size may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets,” said Jose Sifontes, SBA’s Puerto Rico district director.

The SBA may increase a loan up to 20 percent of the total amount of disaster damage to real estate and/or leasehold improvements, as verified by SBA, to make improvements that lessen the risk of property damage by future disasters of the same kind.

For small businesses and most private non-profit organizations of all sizes, the SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. EIDL assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any physical property damage.

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Interest rates are as low as 2.5 percent for homeowners and renters, 3 percent for non-profit organizations and 4 percent for businesses with terms up to 30 years. The SBA sets loan amounts and terms based on each applicant's financial condition.

Individuals and businesses may obtain information on loan applications by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for people with speech or hearing disabilities), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET or by sending an e-mail to disastercustomerservice@sba.gov. Business loan applications can also be downloaded from the SBA website at www.sba.gov. Completed applications should be mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The filing deadline to return applications for physical property damage is **December 27, 2010**. The deadline to return economic injury applications is **July 28, 2011**.

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For more information about the SBA's Disaster Loan Programs, visit our website at www.sba.gov.