



DISASTER NEWS

Loans for Homeowners, Renters and Businesses of All Sizes

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SBA STANDS READY TO ASSIST VICTIMS OF THE CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

SACRAMENTO – Steve Preston, Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), today announced that low-interest disaster loans are now available to California residents and businesses. These disaster loans are available because of President Bush’s Federal disaster declaration.

The declaration covers the counties of **Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara** and **Ventura** as a result of the wildfires beginning October 21.

“We look forward to working with the State of California to make our loans available to homeowners, renters and businesses of all sizes affected by these wildfires,” said Administrator Preston. “We will be swift in our efforts to help California disaster victims rebuild their homes and businesses. Once local recovery facilities are identified in the declared areas, SBA officials will provide one-on-one assistance to disaster loan applicants.”

Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property.

Businesses of any size and private non-profit organizations may borrow up to \$1.5 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, and other business assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to homeowners and businesses to help with the cost of making improvements that protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future.

For small businesses only, 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 property damage.

Interest rates can be as low as 2.937 percent for homeowners and renters and 4 percent for businesses with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by SBA and are based upon each applicant’s financial condition.

To be considered for all forms of disaster assistance, victims must first call the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at 1-800-621-3362. Additional details on the location of assistance centers can be obtained by calling the SBA Customer Service Center at **(800) 659-2955**. The filing deadline to return applications for property damage is **December 24, 2007**. The EIDL deadline is **July 24, 2008**.

For more information visit SBA’s website at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance.

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