SIX MONTHS AFTER HURRICANE CHARLEY ASSISTANCE CONTINUES TO FLOW TO VICTIMS AND COMMUNITIES
TWO WEEKS LEFT TO APPLY FOR AID

ORLANDO—Hurricane Charley made landfall Aug. 13, 2004, as a Category 4 storm on Florida’s west coast city of Port Charlotte. By the time it crossed and exited the state’s east coast, north of Daytona Beach as a Category 1 hurricane, 2.7 million individuals had been forced to evacuate. Nearly 1.2 million households were without power and there were almost 143,000 communication outages reported.

The State Emergency Response Team (SERT) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mobilized what would become rescue and recovery efforts for the second most costly hurricane in United States history according to insurance experts.

In the six months since Hurricane Charley, three more hurricanes descended upon the state of Florida in a seven-week period. The devastation left by these four events has caused nearly 1.23 million victims to apply for federal and state assistance. Approved aid for disaster damages to date has surpassed $4 billion:

- **$1.130 billion** for assistance including housing, personal property and other expenses, crisis counseling and legal services;
- **$1.170 billion** for emergency response and protective measures;
- **$1.34 billion** from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for low-interest loans to repair storm-damaged homes and businesses; and
- **$424.5 million** in Public Assistance funds to help local governments and certain private, nonprofit entities repair and rebuild infrastructure and buildings, and clear an estimated 53 million cubic yards of debris following the disasters.

Almost 860,000 housing inspections have been completed and Floridians are residing in more than 15,000 manufactured units brought into the state by FEMA to house residents with no other means.

The deadline for all homeowners, renters and business owners who sustained damage from Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne to apply for federal and state disaster assistance has been extended until Feb. 28, 2005. Officials urge individuals to register by calling FEMA at **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**. The hearing- or speech-impaired should call **TTY 1-800-462-7585**. Both numbers operate daily from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

---more---
Applicants also may register for assistance online at FEMA’s web site, http://www.fema.gov. Look for and click on the words “Register for Disaster Assistance Online” located in the right-hand side of the page.

A breakdown of the amounts and types of disaster assistance provided to individuals from Hurricane Charley is as follows:

- More than 270,000 individuals have registered for state and federal assistance.
- More than $202 million in federal and state disaster assistance grants have been approved for Floridians. Of that amount, $88.5 million has been approved to pay for lodging expenses, rental assistance and minimal home repairs. More than $113.7 million covers other needs, including such items as repair or replacement of personal property, funeral expenses, and medical and dental costs related to the storm.
- SBA has approved more than $409 million for 13,000 applicants.
- More than $5 million has been disbursed in Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits.
- So far, almost $163 million in public assistance funds have been obligated for 712 requests for aid from local governments and private, nonprofit entities.
- More than 178,000 housing inspections have been completed.
- More than 170,000 tarps were distributed to individuals, and volunteers and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers covered more than 37,000 roofs with plastic sheeting.
- 4,845 National Flood Insurance Program claims have been received.
- Nearly $232 million was paid for emergency response and protective measures including dispersing 1.2 million liters of water, 8.1 million pounds of ice and more than a half-million meals ready to eat.
- 276 shelters were set up to hold more than 102,000 individuals, and volunteers cooked nearly 4.2 million meals.
- Disaster Medical Assistance Teams treated more than 3,870 patients.
- 34 deaths were attributed to the disaster.

Attached is a county-by-county breakdown of individual disaster assistance provided to Floridians for all the 2004 hurricanes.

The State Emergency Response Team (SERT) is a collaboration of Florida’s state agencies led by the state coordinating officer. SERT’s mission is to ensure that Florida is prepared to respond to emergencies, recover from them, and mitigate their impacts. Visit http://www.floridadisaster.org for the latest information on the hurricane relief efforts.

FEMA prepares the nation for all hazards and manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates mitigation activities, trains first responders, works with state and local emergency managers, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.

###

For information on SERT go to www.floridadisaster.org; For FEMA, go to www.fema.gov