



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR
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The Aftermath of Hurricane Sandy

JACK M. MARTINS November 16, 2012

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It's been over two weeks since Superstorm Sandy hit our region, causing heavy damage to many of our communities. While this storm came and went during the course of a day, its ramifications still continue to this day. Whether you sustained damage to your property or damage to your livelihood, just about everyone has been affected by this storm.

Each day, we move closer to recovery. In order to progress, there are governmental and volunteer organizations that are providing assistance. I put together this update that I hope will be helpful.

FEMA

Nassau County received a major disaster declaration from FEMA, making our areas eligible for federal support of recovery efforts. According to FEMA, disaster assistance is financial or direct assistance to individuals and families whose property has been damaged or destroyed as a result of a federally-declared disaster, and whose losses are not covered by insurance. FEMA provides assistance. In order to receive it, you will need to register with FEMA by either calling the helpline at 1-800-621-3362 or visiting <http://www.disasterassistance.gov>. To see what assistance is available, visit <http://www.fema.gov/disaster-assistance-available-fema>. You can also visit a FEMA Disaster Recovery Center. Those that have been set up in the area include: Nassau Community College (1 Education Drive, Garden City in the student union building), Mitchell Field Athletic Complex (1 Charles Lindbergh Boulevard, Uniondale) and New Cassel Community Center Garden (141 Garden Street, Westbury).

Empire State Development

There is assistance for small businesses who have been impacted by Sandy. New York State's Empire State Development has provided a website that has information on how to apply for assistance such as emergency small businesses loans and sales tax exemption on expenditures related to Sandy recovery. The website is <http://www.esd.ny.gov/StormRecovery.asp>.

New York State Small Business Development Center

The New York State Small Business Development Center has opened temporary locations to assist business affected by Sandy. The location can be found at <http://www.nyssbdc.org/disaster.html>. Small business owners can also apply for a disaster loan through the U.S. Small Business Administration at <http://www.sba.gov/content/applying-disaster-loan> or <https://disasterloan.sba.gov>.

The Business Council of New York State

The Business Council of New York State has set up a list of resources that may be helpful in assisting businesses at <http://bcnys.org/whatsnew/2012/Hurricane-Resources.html>.

New York State Department of Financial Services

The New York State Department of Financial Services has set up a 24/7 hotline to assist in answering insurance-related questions regarding Sandy and also help consumer file complaints if they are unable to resolve any disputes with their insurance carriers. The hotline is 800-339-1759. You can file a complaint online at <http://www.dfs.ny.gov/consumer/fileacomplaint.htm>.

Federal Disaster Unemployment Benefit

Federal disaster unemployment assistance is now available to all New Yorkers who lost their jobs as a result of Hurricane Sandy. Disaster unemployment benefits are available to provide financial support to anyone who has lost their job and live or work in the Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Westchester counties. To apply for unemployment benefits or disaster unemployment assistance, those affected by the storm and have lost their job or income should call the Department of Labor's Telephone Claims Center (TCC) at 1-888-209-8124 by December 3, 2012.

New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

The New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services has put together resources that can be found at <http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/oem/event/sandy/sandy-info.cfm>.

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is providing food, shelter, relief supplies to those who need it during the recovery. A center is open for food at Nassau Community College, 1 Education Drive in Garden City. For information, visit <http://www.redcross.org>.

Disaster Guide Available

I have also included a Disaster Guide with valuable information to assist in the recovery. It can be downloaded from my website at <http://www.nysenate.gov/press-release/disaster-assistance-guide-available>.