



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## UPDATE---Hurricane Sandy Relief Efforts and Information

[ERIC ADAMS](#) November 13, 2012

### Hurricane Sandy Update

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NYC RAPID REPAIRS

On Saturday, Mayor Bloomberg announced NYC Rapid Repairs, an unprecedented partnership with FEMA to quickly and efficiently fix homes damaged by Sandy. Not only will homeowners who enroll in the program get back in their homes faster, they will not have to pay upfront for the repairs.

This new and unprecedented program will send teams of contractors and City inspectors into neighborhoods impacted by Hurricane Sandy and quickly and efficiently make necessary repairs to damaged homes.

We are bringing in contractors who will be given responsibility for specific geographic areas hard hit by Sandy.

These contractors will be responsible for repairing the homes of anyone who wants to take part in NYC Rapid Repairs.

Under the typical FEMA process, it is up to the homeowner to arrange for repair work and carry it out, but this new system will make repairs happen more quickly and efficiently.

Beginning Tuesday 11/13, homeowners will be able sign up for NYC Rapid Repairs by going to NYC.gov or by calling 311.

They will need a FEMA ID number, which they can get by registering at DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 1-800-621-3362.

The NYC Rapid Repairs teams will work closely with City agencies, including the Department of Buildings and Department of Housing Preservation and Development, to make sure that any necessary inspections and certifications are done as quickly as possible.

President Obama, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, and FEMA Director Craig Fugate all deserve credit for their collaboration in making this program a reality.

If they so choose, homeowners still have the option of having repairs made through their insurance company or with a standard reimbursement from FEMA. If they choose NYC Rapid Repairs, we will handle getting the contractors in and getting the work done.

NYC Rapid Repairs will be managed by Kathryn Mallon, who currently runs the \$14 billion capital program at the Department of Environmental Protection.

Homes eligible for NYC Rapid Repairs will be those who have received a green placard from the Department of Buildings, indicating that the home is structurally sound.

## ROCKAWAY FERRY

The Mayor announced a partnership to provide ferry service between the Rockaways and Manhattan while subway service on that route is suspended. Seastreak will operate the ferry service beginning Monday, November 12.

Ferries will depart from Beach 108th Street and Beach Channel Drive, where the Economic Development Corporation has installed a temporary landing, and stop at Pier 11 in Lower Manhattan with free transfers between Pier 11 and East 34th Street in Midtown.

The service will start at 5:45 AM in the Rockaways with ferries departing for Manhattan regularly until 9:20 AM, with regular service resuming during the evening rush. Each trip should take about 40-45 minutes.

One-way fares will be \$2.

Further details and schedules can be found here: <http://www.nycedc.com/blog-entry/new-rockaway-ferry-service>

## BE PREPARED FOR FEMA HOME INSPECTION

Residents awaiting inspectors sent by the Federal Emergency Management Agency can begin their cleanup process and remove trash prior to the arrival of FEMA inspectors. If you do not have insurance to cover your disaster-related damages, an inspection performed by a FEMA inspector is required to process your application.

Preparing for a FEMA home inspection includes removing as much trash from inside and out of a residence as is physically possible; it facilitates the process. Trash can be removed before your insurance company visits the property. Prior to disposing of damaged property, take an inventory of it and/or photographers. Your municipality can provide information on their scheduled trash removal.

Upon arrival the inspector will request proof of residency. The address on the documents or identification must match the residence that was damaged. The following are accepted forms for proof of residency:

Owners: Proof of ownership (your deed, tax records, mortgage payment book, or a copy of your dwelling's insurance policy for the address, showing you as the owner)

Owners and renters: Proof of occupancy (your driver's license address, any first-class government mail sent to you within the last three months at that address, or recent utility bills in your name at that address) and insurance policies

Renters only: Lease agreement

After registering, applicants will receive a pamphlet in the mail, entitled, "Help After A Disaster, An Applicant's Guide to the Individuals and Households Program." This pamphlet should answer most questions and provide information about other programs that may be able to assist in recovery efforts. For complete information about the inspection process, go to [fema.gov](http://fema.gov) and search for "Inspection Process."

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA's Intergovernmental Affairs Division at (202) 646-3444 or at [FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov).

## DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

If you lost work or income due to Hurricane Sandy, you may be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance, but you **MUST** apply before December 3rd, 2012.

What is Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)?

DUA is a Federal program that provides payments to people in a federally declared disaster area who have lost work or income due to the disaster. DUA is available to many individuals who may not be eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits, including those who are self-employed. If you lost income or your job and live or work in the Bronx, Kings, New York, Richmond, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland and Westchester counties, you may qualify for DUA. Those eligible can receive between \$152 and \$405 per week for up to 27 weeks while they remain unemployed as a result of the disaster.

How do I apply?

Applications should be made as soon as possible, but no later than December 3, 2012.

To apply, call the Department of Labor's Telephone Claims Center (TCC) at 1-888-209-8124, apply online at

[https://applications.labor.ny.gov/IndividualReg/?showuib=true&LOCALE=en\\_US](https://applications.labor.ny.gov/IndividualReg/?showuib=true&LOCALE=en_US) , or apply in person at a local DOL One-Stop Career Center or a FEMA Disaster Recovery Center. You should apply as soon as possible to see if you qualify.

More information on eligibility and application procedures for DUA benefits can be found at the NYS Department of Labor websites' DUA Fact Sheet.

Finally, our colleagues at LawHelp have prepared a comprehensive list of resources available to people harmed by Hurricane Sandy at:

[www.mynewyorklegalhelp.com/hurricanesandynyassistance/](http://www.mynewyorklegalhelp.com/hurricanesandynyassistance/)

## EXTENSIONS GRANTED FOR SNAP BENEFITS

SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) recipients in 82 New York City zip codes are now eligible to automatically receive 50 percent of their October monthly SNAP benefit amount to replace food lost as a result of the storm.

Additional zip codes in New York City that experienced extended power loss may be added as more details about the number of households affected becomes available. The updated list can be found here: <http://otda.ny.gov/news/SNAP-replacements.pdf>.

Recipients in all five boroughs and the other seven counties affected can purchase hot and prepared foods with their benefits through the end of November, which under federal regulations, is not usually allowed.