



## NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **DEADLINE FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO JANUARY**

**Columbus (October 26, 2005)** – Residents from Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi who were forced to evacuate from hurricanes Katrina and Rita and are currently residing in Ohio are encouraged to register for federal disaster assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The filing deadline for residents impacted by hurricanes Katrina or Rita needing FEMA assistance has been extended to January 11, 2006. Those who evacuated from the declared areas are encouraged to call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **1-800-462-7585 (TTY)**, or log onto [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) to apply for federal assistance. FEMA help line operators are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

“The state of Ohio does not want families and individuals affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita to miss out on the opportunity to apply for federal assistance,” said Ohio Emergency Management Agency Executive Director Nancy J. Dragani.

For those who have already filed, an Automated Status Update has been implemented to immediately check the status of their case and obtain basic information regarding their account. Following a set of voice-activated prompts, the applicant may access information about personal registration, eligibility status, financial compensation, the appeals process and other information. Applicants still have the option of speaking directly to a FEMA help line operator as well.

To access the Automated Status Update, the applicant should call **1-800-621-FEMA**, and provide the registration identification number, date of birth and the last four digits of their Social Security number.

For more information on hurricanes Katrina and Rita disaster assistance, log onto [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

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