

COSTEP-CT TIPS
Federal Disaster Assistance, or Working with FEMA
FOR STATE AGENCY, TOWN OR TRIBAL NATION
Libraries and Cultural Heritage Organizations

If the president declares a disaster, libraries and other cultural heritage organizations, such as museums, archives, educational institutions, art organizations and zoos, that are open to the public, may be eligible to receive federal assistance (also called public assistance) in the form of a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

State, town or tribal libraries and cultural heritage organizations **ARE ELIGIBLE** and should report damage to state, town or tribal emergency management officials and work with them to get federal assistance.

Private non-profit libraries and cultural heritage organizations may be eligible but will have to follow a different process, as described on another COSTEP-CT tip sheet.

WELL BEFORE ANY EVENT IS PREDICTED

- Work on or update your disaster plan (annually)
- Take “before” pictures of the interior and exterior of your building and collection spaces
- Find out your agency, town or tribal nation DUNS and FEIN numbers
- Keep copies of the disaster plan, “before” pictures and documents at home and at work
- Read Heritage Preservation’s *Guide to navigating Federal Emergency Management Agency and Small Business Administration disaster aid for cultural institutions*
<https://www.heritagepreservation.org/PDFS/GuidetoNavigatingFEMASBA.pdf>
- Meet with local emergency responders (and keep your contact information current)
- Take steps to prevent damage by fixing problems in advance

BEFORE A DISASTER

- When a bad storm is predicted, take steps to protect your building and collections
- Keep a record of your efforts to prevent damage (pictures, receipts, timesheets, etc.)
- Update and take home copies of the disaster plan, “before” pictures and documents needed to file for federal assistance. Also take home back-ups of your business and collection records
- Re-read Heritage Preservation's *Guide to navigating ...*

AFTER A DISASTER

- Assess the damage and take pictures as soon as possible: puddles in the stacks or tree on the roof
- Promptly report damage to the state agency, town or tribal emergency manager. Your report helps the whole state, town or tribe qualify for federal aid
- Report the following (these costs may be eligible for federal assistance, firm quotes are not necessary):
 - Emergency protective measures (Efforts before, during and after a disaster)
 - Debris removal
 - Damage to real estate, equipment, inventory, fixtures
 - Damage to collections
- Fully document your efforts to clean up, to prevent further damage and to repair the damage. Even if you are otherwise eligible, **YOU WON'T GET FEDERAL ASSISTANCE WITHOUT THIS DOCUMENTATION.** Take pictures at every stage. Keep inspection reports, insurance statement of loss and contractor cost estimates. Keep audit quality documentation of all repair work done, expenses for that work, copies of RFPs, bid comparison documents, contract awards, cancelled checks, costs for materials and supplies, contractor costs, staff personnel records for time spent on the project, etc. It will also be vital if you apply for Hazard Mitigation Grant funds at some future date

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IF A FEDERAL EMERGENCY IS DECLARED

- Watch the news for an announcement that a disaster was declared (usually by county)
- You should be already working with your state, town or tribal emergency management official
- If unsure if your parent agency is filing an application for assistance, watch for the list of FEMA Public Assistance Program Applicant Briefings (which are announced with short notice), attend one and submit the forms yourself. Your forms will be merged with your parent agency's later. The forms are:
 - "Request for Public Assistance" (FEMA Form 90-49). Specific damages not yet needed
 - "Receipt of List of Assurances" form
 - "DUNS/FEIN" form
- It need not be the briefing nearest your location. Do not attend a briefing for "Individual Assistance." Look for the "Public Assistance" briefings. The announcements often come with little advance warning
- If you or your parent agency do not attend a briefing and/or do not submit the forms by the deadline, you will not be eligible to receive federal assistance
- Even if you were eligible in a previous disaster, you will have to submit all the paperwork again

AFTER YOU APPLY FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

- Expect a federal representative to call within 5 business days to arrange to meet with you, identify your needs and your eligibility and to go over the additional paperwork. Have ready:
 - Documentation: pictures, estimates, timesheets, invoices, etc. of costs already incurred
 - If on or eligible for National Register of Historic Places, FEMA understands it will be more costly to repair

NOTES AND RESOURCES

Details of the application process may change. The required Forms and information may change.

- Heritage Preservation's *Guide to navigating Federal Emergency Management Agency and Small Business Administration disaster aid for cultural institutions*
<https://www.heritagepreservation.org/PDFS/GuidetoNavigatingFEMASBA.pdf>
- *Disaster Assistance Programs* from Connecticut Dept. of Emergency Services & Public Protection / Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Protection
<http://www.ct.gov/demhs/cwp/view.asp?a=1910&q=436940> or at <http://www.ct.gov/demhs> and click on "Emergency Management", then "Public Assistance"
- Get a free DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>)
- Find out your FEIN (Federal Employer Identification Number) number from your administrators or see <http://www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-&Self-Employed/Employer-ID-Numbers-%28EINs%29->
- COSTEP-CT : Coordinated Statewide Emergency Preparedness <http://costep.cslib.org/>