

Matsui Welcomes Opening of FEMA Disaster Assistance Center

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Washington, DC - Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) welcomed the opening of a disaster assistance center in Sacramento by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). With the combination of FEMA's hotline (1-800-621-FEMA) and the disaster assistance center, Sacramentans, whose homes and businesses were damaged during the recent winter storms (December 17, 2005 through January 3, 2006), will be able to speak with FEMA officials to discuss programs and financial assistance for which they may qualify.

"I encourage all individuals and businesses that suffered damage from the New Year's Weekend storms to explore their eligibility for these funds and contact FEMA. Through financial assistance and other programs the federal government demonstrates its commitment to ensure Sacramento, and the other areas impacted by the heavy rains and flooding, have the funds necessary to recover from the damage. I hope Sacramentans will take advantage of these programs," stated Congresswoman Matsui.

FEMA's disaster assistance center is located inside the United Way's offices at 8912 Volunteer Lane. Representatives from FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) will be on hand to explain the assistance programs and answer any questions. The center will be open Monday- Friday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm and on Saturdays from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm until further notice.

Before visiting the disaster assistance center affected homeowners, renters and business owners must register with FEMA by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3262) or by visiting www.fema.gov.

Through FEMA and the SBA, the federal government offers a variety of programs and financial assistance after a disaster. Each offer of financial assistance is judged on its merits after a FEMA inspector visits the residence or business to assess the damage. Funds are available to help homeowners repair uninsured items that were damaged in the storm, as well as to cover a variety of other needs, including medical expenses. Applicants are encouraged to provide FEMA with proof of primary residence, a copy of the deed to their home as well as copies of their insurance policies.

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