

ACCESSING CASH

Getting the cash you need to cover daily expenses, and additional disaster-related expenses, is often a challenge. Consider the following possibilities for accessing cash to get you through while you are waiting for payments through insurance claims and other disaster related programs.

- Banks and credit unions can be a resource during the recovery time following a disaster. Check with your local financial institutions to see if you qualify for extended credit, grants, low interest loans, or low fee checking accounts.
- Check with FEMA and the Small Business Administration to see if you qualify for low-rate loans.
- Consider borrowing against, or taking out, the cash value of your life insurance policies. Call your insurance agent to determine the cash value of your policies.
- If you have a 401(k) or a 403(b) retirement account, you may be able to borrow against your retirement earnings. Consider this only as a last resort and contact your tax or financial advisor before tapping retirement accounts.



Compiled by The Village Financial Resource Center and the North Dakota Society of CPAs (NDSCPA)

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Village Family Service Center
1-800-450-4019 • www.HelpWithMoney.org
Financial counselors at The Village can help you organize your finances and stay on track following a disaster.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
1-800-621-3362 • www.disasterassistance.gov
FEMA provides temporary housing, transportation, low-interest loans and other services related to disaster recovery.

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency
1-877-239-3200 • www.ndhfa.state.nd.us

Minnesota Housing Finance Agency
1-800-657-3769 • www.mhfa.state.mn.us

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants
1-888-777-7707 • www.aicpa.org
The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants provides you with insurance assistance, debt management, and help with your tax issues. Their website is filled with information to help you manage your finances.

Bank of North Dakota
1-800-472-2166 • www.banknd.nd.gov
The Bank of North Dakota can assist you with low interest loans and disaster relief—especially farmers and small businesses.

American Red Cross
1-866-667-9331 • www.redcross.org
Red Cross disaster relief focuses on meeting people's immediate disaster-caused needs. The Red Cross provides shelter, food, and health and mental health services to address basic human needs.

Salvation Army
701-232-5565 • www.thesalarmy.com
The Salvation Army provides both emergency and long-term recovery assistance.

Better Business Bureau
1-800-646-6222 • www.bbb.org
Better Business Bureau websites all across North America are updated to provide you with more information that will help you find trustworthy businesses and charities.

Internal Revenue Service
1-800-829-1040 • www.irs.gov

North Dakota Insurance Commissioner
1-800-247-0560 • www.nd.gov/ndins
Contact the North Dakota Insurance Commissioner for your insurance concerns.

Are You Financially Prepared if Disaster Strikes?



A Guide

If disaster struck your home, would you know what to do?

The Village Family Service Center and the North Dakota Society of CPAs (NDSCPA) recommend taking the following steps when disaster strikes.

CREDITORS

- Make a list of your creditors, their addresses and phone numbers. If this information was destroyed in the disaster, pull your free credit report from www.annualcreditreport.com. It will contain all the contact information you'll need.
- Call each creditor to explain your situation. Ask for the balance due on each account and inquire about the possibility of making payment arrangements. Keep good records and notes on your conversations with each creditor—include the name of the person you talked to and their direct phone number.
- List the balances of all of your accounts and compare against the money you'll have available from grants and low-interest loans and other payments.



- Contact the Bank of North Dakota or FEMA for information about low interest loans and grants.

INSURANCES

- Contact your auto insurance company. If your automobile was damaged in the disaster and you carried comprehensive coverage, you will be able to recover some of the damage by submitting a claim to your insurance company. Your auto insurance may also cover personal items that were in your vehicle.
- Contact your homeowner's insurance company. Explain the situation, and ask them to explain the claims process. Also find out about any special riders or floaters on your policy that may cover additional items such as fine art, jewelry, computers, cameras, and other personal items.
- Check with your employer to see if business property in your home, such as tools, computers and salesman's samples damaged in your home may be covered by their business policy. If you have a home-based business, check with the insurance company that handles your business insurance.

- If you have a loss of crops and carry Multiple Peril Crop Insurance, contact them, as this type of insurance provides coverage against crop losses from nearly all natural disasters.
- When you report a loss, keep a record of who you talked to, and the date and time you talked to them.
- Keep receipts, estimates, and notes of conversations. Take photos of damaged property. The documentation is important for insurance and tax purposes.
- If you have no insurance, contact FEMA.

CONTRACTORS AND RECOVERY EFFORTS

Unfortunately, disaster situations sometimes attract dishonest people attempting to exploit those who need help. When entering into a contract with anyone who provides a service or product to help in your rebuilding and recovery efforts, always check them out by calling the Better Business Bureau or the Secretary of State. Never pay with out-of-pocket cash and beware of paying large sums up front. Also keep good records of any contracts or business transactions.

