

Arkansas Business Navigator Podcast

Episode 12: March 31, 2023 Disaster Relief Resources from SBA, FEMA, and Arkansas, Food and Beverage Startup Series



Hello and welcome to the Arkansas Business Navigator podcast. The show that reviews Small Business Administration and Arkansas business Navigator resources available to support small businesses and entrepreneurs in the natural state. Kam's here and today's episode is about Tornado recovery resources for the impacted communities across the region in addition. We are going to go over events and a new segment focused on disaster resource benefits.

Today's episode is going to go over natural disaster recovery from short term to longer term recovery before we get into those things, I want to highlight what happened on March 31st. There are three separate tornadoes that hit the central and delta regions. Two were significant storms, the strongest per the National Weather Service, was the EF3, with peak winds of 165 mph cost a 32-mile path of destruction that went from West Little Rock to Southeast Cabot. There were at least 2700 structures impacted more than 50 people were injured and admitted to hospitals. Miraculously, only one person was killed. Another EF3 tornado hit the small town of Wynn, Arkansas and ran a total of 73 miles until it dissipated shortly after crossing the Mississippi River the storms. It obliterated structures and homes alike throughout Cross County. And took four lives, sadly.

Short term disaster relief from organizations like FEMA and Red Cross are now available. Red Cross has two open shelters in Little Rock and wind. They serve their immediate needs of disaster survivors by providing. A safe place to sleep and giving food to them.

FEMA has an individual and households' program that will help with temporary housing or temporary housing. Repair or replacement of owner-occupied homes, hazard mitigation and other uninsured or underinsured disaster caused expenses and serious needs. FEMA helps in the form of funds being distributed to individuals and housing being provided directly to individuals or being paid for or reimbursed for temporary housing expenses. The way to receive these benefits. Are through application in order to be eligible to receive FEMA disaster assistance, a member of the household must be a citizen, non-citizen, national or qualified alien of the United States. This will be verified through a valid Social Security number. Another qualification, your primary home has been destroyed or is unlivable by major damage caused in the disaster. The disaster Relief program serves as a supplement to insurance and mitigate the losses of the uninsured. FEMA will not duplicate insurance proceeds, though with their program. You will be able to apply on FEMA's website. You can also download the Red Cross and FEMA apps to your phones or join the social media followings for more updated information on Arkansas Storm relief efforts.

Government contracting opportunities are major revenue generators for small businesses. We're learning of government contracts for disaster recovery work like debris removal, construction, and other disaster support services. Businesses that wish to apply for and secure government contracts to aid disaster relief efforts must register with ABEL and ARBuy. Doing so does not guarantee or establish a contract for questions or support. Contact Arkansas Apex Accelerator, formerly known as PTAC at

apex@uada.edu, or by completing the client intake form that is in the show notes to this episode. Apex Accelerator offers free confidential procurement counseling and technical assistance.

The Arkansas Small Business Technology Development Center has a disaster preparedness page. This page has the FEMA and Red Cross resources mentioned earlier and SBA resources, I am about to mention. They also have a checklist for reopening your business after a disaster and for managing a business in times of financial difficulty. I will leave a link in the show notes.

The SBA has a great disaster relief program. The federal disaster declarations allow special loan products to be offered to the survivors of disaster. Connected areas the disaster loans are available to Cross Lonoke and Pulaski, and for economic injury only in the continuous Arkansas counties of Arkansas Crittenden, Faulkner, Grant, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry, Poinsett, Saint Francis, Saline, White and Woodruff.

Next, I will read from the fact sheet distributed by our Arkansas SBA District Office. If you are located in a declared disaster area, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the SBA.

What types of disaster loans are available? Business physical disaster loans, loans to businesses to repair or replace disaster damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventory, supplies, machinery, and equipment. Businesses of any size or eligible private nonprofit organizations such as charities. Churches, private universities, et cetera, are also eligible. Economic injury disaster loans.

Our working capital loans to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most private nonprofit organizations of all sizes meet their ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot be met as a direct result of the of the disaster. These loans are intended to assist through the disaster recovery period. Home disaster loans, loans to homeowners or renters to repair or replace disaster damage, real estate and personal property, including automobiles.

Where are the credit requirements? Applicants must have a credit history acceptable to the SBA. Applicants must show the ability to repay. All loans collateral is required for all physical loans over \$25,000 and all E IDL loans over \$25,000. SBA takes real estate as collateral when it is available. SBA will not decline a loan for lack of collateral, but it requires you to pledge what is available.

Additionally, SBA's Little Rock business Recovery Center is located at Terry Library. 2015 Napa Valley Dr. Little Rock. It opens at 1:00 PM. On Thursday, April 6, the regular business hours from that .4 will be Mondays through Fridays at 9:00 to 6:00 on Saturdays from 9:00 to 4:00, they will have staff on site to answer disaster recovery related questions.

Next, let's get into some events happening throughout the month of April. The food and beverage startup series launched a couple days ago. You can register for each course individually. So, there's still time to join. The content is as follows. This past Tuesday, April 11th. There was a class on product Research and development and licensing with the Arkansas Department of Health. On Tuesday, April 18th they're going to go over product pricing and financing with Cureate Courses. Then on Tuesday, April 25th and Monday, May 1st, there will be courses on market readiness with Cureate Courses and a panel discussion and sample showcase hosted at Rocket Lab respectfully. You can sign up online via the link and the show notes. On Tuesday, April 20th, the Skills Lab training is hosting where to find candidates and other hiring strategies online at noon. You should sign up via the link in the show notes.

Instead of questions on this episode, we're going to pivot to a True or false segment? I thought it was fitting with the disaster. Statement one: I must choose between a FEMA individual assistance grant or an SBA loan. False; qualifying for an SBA loan does not mean you no longer qualify for FEMA assistance. In fact, there are several important reasons to complete and submit an SBA application. Even if you think you don't currently need a loan, homeowners and renters are available for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroy a personal property and homeowners can apply for up to \$200,000 to repair or replace damage to their personal residence. If you apply for but are denied SBA assistance, FEMA may be able to offer additional grant assistance.

Statement 2: The SBA application may help me get referrals to other federal grant programs. That statement is true. If you apply to an SBA low interest disaster. Loan and you are not. You may be eligible for additional grant assistance from FEMA, including replacement of essential household items, replacement or repair of a damaged vehicle, storage costs, or other disaster related expenses.

Statement 3: SBA loans are available for businesses and nonprofits of any size. True businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations. May borrow up to \$2,000,000 to repair or replace damage or destroyed real estate, machinery, equipment, inventory, and other business assets. SBA can also lend additional funds to businesses and homeowners to help with the cost of improvements to protect, prevent, or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future for small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most private nonprofit organizations of any size. SBA offers economic injury disaster loans to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. Economic injury assistance is available to businesses regardless of any property damage.

That is, it! Thanks for listening to the podcast. Consider subscribing to get notified when new episodes drop. If you found the information useful, we'd really appreciate it if you. Could leave a review. On wherever you listen, if you want to ask a question and have it answered on the show, go to the questions link in the show notes and complete the form. The Arkansas Business Navigator Podcast is produced by Brandon L Matthews and Kamelle Gomez. Our music was created by Music Unlimited by Pixabay, the Arkansas Business Navigator is a program of the Arkansas small Business and Technology Development Center, hosted by UA Little Rock and is funded in part through a grant from the US Small Business Administration, all opinions, conclusions and or recommendations expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SBA. Special thanks to our partners at the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center, University of Arkansas at Little Rock and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension service. To learn more about Arkansas Business Navigator, how to access free confidential business consulting and resources go to arbusinessnavigator.com. Thank you!