

This page explains the privacy policy for our digital communication channels including fema.gov, text messages, and the smartphone app.

This website is provided as a public service by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Information presented on this site is considered public information and may be distributed or copied. Use of appropriate byline/photo/image credits is requested.

For more information, please contact FEMA-Privacy@fema.dhs.gov.



Read about the [March 2019 privacy issue](#) involving personally identifiable information of some disaster survivors, how FEMA responded and what resources are available if you were affected.

Information Collected And Stored Automatically

1. The information we learn about you from your visit to our website depends upon what functions you perform when visiting our site.
2. For site management, information is collected for statistical purposes. This government computer system

uses software programs to create summary statistics, which are used for such purposes as assessing what information is of most and least interest, determining technical design specifications, and identifying system performance or problem areas.

3. If you do nothing during your visit but browse through the website, read pages, or download information, we will gather and store certain information about your visit automatically. This information does not identify you personally. We automatically collect and store the following information about your visit:

- The Internet domain (for example, "xcompany.com" if you use a private Internet access account, or "yourschool.edu" if you connect from a university's domain) and IP address (an IP address is a number that is automatically assigned to your computer whenever you are surfing the Web) from which you access our website;
- The type of browser and operating system used to access our site;
- The date and time you access our site;
- The pages you visit; and
- If you linked to the FEMA website from another website, the address of that website.

We use this information to help us make our site more useful to visitors -- to learn about the number of visitors to our site and the types of technology our visitors use. We do not track or record information about individuals and their visits.

Children's Privacy

Certain areas of FEMA's website provide disaster-related educational content for children. FEMA is committed to complying with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and does not use its website to collect personal information from children under the age of 13 years old. In instances where a child under the age of 13 submits a question or comment, FEMA will only use the child's e-mail address to respond to the inquiry and will delete the message in accordance with its approved records schedule. For more information, please contact FEMA-Privacy@fema.dhs.gov.

Cookies

FEMA uses cookies on its websites solely to allow complex, software user-driven applications to function correctly. For example, FEMA's online ordering services for U.S. Fire Administration and the FEMA Flood Map Store publications allow users to shop through online catalogs. When a user "checks off" a publication, the transaction consists of a separate "signal" that is sent by the user's computer to

FEMA's site. In order to maintain a complete record of the total order, the FEMA server sends a "cookie" back to the user's computer solely for the purposes of identifying that user's order. The only information collected during this process is related to that particular publication order. This information is not retained after the online order is sent or completed. FEMA's use of cookie technology is not otherwise designed, intended or used to collect, store or analyze information pertaining to Internet users.

Google Analytics

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has enabled Google Analytics on FEMA's Website(s). Google Analytics is a tool that helps the Department gather feedback using non-identifiable aggregated data such as number of unique visitors to a page and the navigation the visitor took to get to a specific piece of content. The Department will use this data to make modifications to the website to improve the user experience and monitor the traffic on the website. In order to use this tool, Google sets a cookie on your machine or device. While this cookie is set automatically, you may chose not to have the cookie placed on your machine or device without any modifications to the appearance or functionality of the website by following the instructions below. You may also delete the cookie at any time through the options tab on your browser also outlined below. The cookie monitors your navigation through the website and records:

1. What content was viewed.
2. How you arrived at the specific content.
3. Your ISP provider including the ISP provider's geographic information.
4. The time spent viewing a specific piece of content.
5. The time spent on the entire website.
6. The path taken to access the website.
7. The connection speed of the session.

Google Analytics does not tell the Department who you are or allow the Department to determine your identity nor does the cookie monitor or record your web usage after you leave the Department's website(s). The data is automatically sent from the cookie on your machine or device to Google's system which immediately aggregates the data. Neither the Department nor Google will ever have access to the specifics of your particular session. What the Department will see is the aggregate data from all users for a particular time period. The Department is gathering this information for internal purposes and has chosen to not share the aggregate data with Google. We may use the aggregated data to share with our partners and contractors to help improve the user experience. The Department will retain the aggregated data as long as required per our records retention policy. The Department has taken great efforts to protect your privacy. The DHS Privacy Office has conducted a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA)

specifically on how the use of Google Analytics impacts the privacy of visitors to the Department's website(s). Please visit the Privacy Office's website to view the PIA at [DHS.gov](https://www.dhs.gov). To opt out of having the cookie installed on your machine or device, you may need to adjust your internet browser's cookie settings. If you use multiple browsers on your machine or device, you will need to complete this process for each browser used. Please visit [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov) for instructions for common browsers. If you have any questions about our use of Google Analytics please contact the DHS Office of Public Affairs.

Security and Intrusion Detection

Unauthorized attempts to defeat or circumvent security features, to use the system for other than intended purposes, to deny service to authorized users, to access, obtain, alter, damage, or destroy information, or otherwise to interfere with the system or its operation is prohibited. Evidence of such acts may be disclosed to law enforcement authorities and result in criminal prosecution under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and the National Information Infrastructure Protection Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-294), (18 U.S.C. 1030), or other applicable criminal laws.

For site security purposes and to ensure that this service remains available to all users, this government computer system employs software programs to monitor host and

network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information, or otherwise cause damage.

Except for authorized law enforcement investigations, no other attempts are made to identify individual users or their usage habits. Raw data logs are used for no other purposes and are scheduled for regular destruction in accordance with National Archives and Records Administration guidelines.

Unauthorized attempts to upload information or change information on this service are strictly prohibited and may be punishable under the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act of 1986 and the National Information Infrastructure Protection Act."

FEMA Text Messages

All FEMA text messages are sent from our dedicated number, which is 43362 (4FEMA). We will never charge you for text message alerts, but carrier message and data rates may apply. Your carrier may collect additional data elements, please see their privacy policies for further details. We will not use your phone number to track, reverse look up, or for any type of commercial marketing. Mobile numbers will not be shared with third parties. [Visit our text message page](#) for basic commands and how to get started.

Thank you for using the FEMA (“our”, “us” or “we”) website located at www.FEMA.gov (the “Website”) and our services. Please do not use our Website or any of our services until

after you carefully review and accept all terms and conditions in this Privacy Policy (the “Policy”), as well as the FEMA Terms of Service (the “Terms of Service”). This Policy is part of, and is subject to, the Terms of Service; any capitalized terms not defined in this Policy have the meaning identified in the Terms of Service. FEMA and you may be referred to in this Policy individually as a “party” and collectively as “parties.”

BY ACCESSING OR USING THE FEMA WEBSITE OR SERVICES, OR BY CLICKING A BOX INDICATING YOUR ACCEPTANCE, OR BY EXECUTING AN ORDER FORM THAT MENTIONS THE FEMA TERMS OF SERVICE, YOU AGREE TO THIS POLICY. IF YOU ARE ACCESSING OR USING OUR WEBSITE OR SERVICES AS AN AGENT OR EMPLOYEE OF A COMPANY OR OTHER LEGAL ENTITY, YOU REPRESENT THAT YOU HAVE THE LEGAL AUTHORITY TO BIND, AND ARE BINDING, THAT LEGAL ENTITY TO THIS POLICY (IN WHICH CASE “YOU” AND “YOUR” REFER TO THAT LEGAL ENTITY). IF YOU DO NOT HAVE THAT AUTHORITY, OR IF YOU DO NOT (OR LACK THE LEGAL CAPACITY TO) AGREE TO ALL OF THIS POLICY AND THE TERMS OF SERVICE, YOU ARE NOT PERMITTED TO USE OUR WEBSITE OR SERVICES.

FEMA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MODIFY THIS POLICY, AND THE TERMS OF SERVICE, AND OUR OTHER POLICIES AND SERVICES AT ANY TIME. SUCH MODIFICATIONS WILL TAKE EFFECT WHEN FEMA POSTS ON ITS WEBSITE, OR OTHERWISE PROVIDES, AN UPDATED VERSION OF ANY OF ITS POLICIES OR SERVICES (OUR USE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION IS

GOVERNED BY THE VERSION OF THIS POLICY AND THE TERMS OF SERVICE IN EFFECT AT THE TIME WE USE THE INFORMATION, NOT WHEN IT IS COLLECTED.) ACCORDINGLY, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR REGULARLY REVIEWING THE FEMA WEBSITE, TERMS OF SERVICE, THIS POLICY AND FEMA 'S OTHER POLICIES. YOUR CONTINUED USE OF OUR WEBSITE OR ANY FEMA SERVICES AFTER SUCH MODIFICATIONS ARE POSTED, OR OTHERWISE PROVIDED, CONSTITUTES YOUR CONSENT TO SUCH CHANGES.

Your privacy is important to us, and we understand that you expect us to share Personally-Identifiable Information (defined below) about you carefully. This Policy describes our practices regarding your Personally-Identifiable Information. Specifically, this Policy sets forth:

What Personally-Identifiable Information is; What information about you FEMA collects; How FEMA uses such information; How FEMA shares such information; How FEMA protects such information; and How you may access, verify and, if necessary, correct such information.

1. "Personally-Identifiable Information" Defined

In this Policy, "Personally-Identifiable Information" and "PII" mean any information that may be used (alone or in combination with other information) to identify an individual, including, but not limited to: a first or last name; a home or other physical address; an email address; a phone number or other contact information; and credit card or other payment information.

2. What Information About You Does FEMA Collect?

When you use the FEMA Website or services, FEMA may collect information about you in the following ways: (a) you may provide information to us (e.g., during the registration or ordering process); and (b) we may receive information about you automatically or indirectly in the course of our interactions (e.g., by virtue of you using our Website).

Information You Provide

We receive and store information (including, but not limited to, Personally-Identifiable Information) you choose to enter on the FEMA Website or provide us in other ways, e.g., by telephone or email. For example, when you register for our services or complete an online questionnaire, we collect information about you, which may include: your first and last name; home and other mailing address; email address; birthday; phone number; credit card or other payment information; and general information about you and your business activities. You may also choose to provide information regarding friends or family members (e.g., to tell them about the FEMA Website or services). We may also combine information you provide with other information about you that you provide to other online and offline sources (e.g., our merchant partners who may give that information to us) to provide you with a better experience and improve the quality of our services. For certain services, we may give you the opportunity to opt-out of such combining of information. You can also choose not to provide us with certain information, but then you might not be able to take advantage of some of our services or features. In general, the more information you give

us, the better we can provide and improve our Website and services to meet your needs.

Information We Collect Automatically or Indirectly

We also collect other information about you automatically or indirectly when you use our Website or services. For example, we automatically receive and record certain information about you (i) when you use a mobile device to access our Website or services, and (ii) when you use a Web browser to access our Website or services – e.g., your IP address, the type of Web browser you are using, Cookie Information (defined below) and the Web pages you request, travel to and link to. Our Website and services also automatically collect usage information like the numbers and frequency of visitors to our Website and its components. Cookie Information (also called “Cookies”) is alphanumeric identifying information we transfer to your computer through your Web browser to enable our Website and other systems to recognize your browser and tell us how and when certain pages in our Website are visited and by how many people. Our Cookies do not collect Personally-Identifiable Information, and we do not combine PII collected through Cookies with other PII to tell us your identity, screen name or email address.

The "Help" portion of the toolbar in most Web browsers provide information regarding how to prevent your browser from accepting new Cookies, how to command the browser to tell you when you receive a new Cookie, or how to fully disable Cookies. We strongly recommend that you leave the Cookies activated, however, because Cookies enable you to take advantage of some of our Website's most attractive

features. Several companies also offer programs that help you to visit websites anonymously. Although FEMA will not be able to provide a personalized experience if we cannot recognize you, we want you to be aware these programs exist. When you connect to our Website or other services using your mobile device, FEMA will receive information your mobile service provider sends uniquely identifying your device. Certain FEMA services may also require us to collect from you the phone number, and/or other unique identifying information, for your device. We may associate that phone number to the mobile device identification information and to other information we have collected from and about you; however we will not use that number for telemarketing. Some mobile service providers are required to operate a system that will record the physical location of devices that use their service. Depending on the mobile service provider, FEMA may automatically receive that information.

3. How Does FEMA Use the Information We Receive?

FEMA may use the information (including PII) we receive to send you (and your friends and family, as applicable) promotional emails regarding our Website and services, your preferences, and ways we can improve future user experiences with FEMA . For example, FEMA may use your information to offer you extended services and/or functionality. If at any time you decide you want to stop receiving such promotional emails from FEMA , please notify us by opting out or sending an email to FEMA-Privacy@fema.dhs.gov.

We may use the information we receive to: (a) provide you access to our Website and services; (b) monitor and support

your use of our Website and services; (c) better understand what products and services are of interest to our users; (d) analyze how we may improve our Website and services; (e) notify you of changes to our services or applicable terms; and (f) accomplish a specific purpose for which you provide particular information to us.

We only utilize Website usage data in aggregated form. We use such aggregated usage data to understand users' preferences, and to measure interest in aspects of our Website and services (e.g., how often customers use various parts of the Website). That helps us enhance the appeal of our Website and services to as many customers as possible.

4. How Does FEMA Share the Information We Receive?

FEMA is not in the business of selling your information. We do not share your Personally-Identifiable Information except as approved by you or described in this Policy:

A. Related Companies, Agents and Service Providers

We may share your information (including PII) with any legal entity that is affiliated with FEMA for purposes consistent with this Policy. FEMA may also engage other independent companies and individuals to perform services on our behalf (e.g., processing credit card payments, sending postal mail and email to you, and analyzing data). Although these agents and service providers may have access to your PII to perform such services for us, we will not permit them to use any PII for any other purpose.

B. Business Partners

We may also provide certain information (e.g., statistical data) to our third party business partners regarding how our customers, in the aggregate, use our Website and services. We share this type of information to help our business partners optimize their related services and understand how often our users utilize aspects of our Website and services that are relevant to our business partners.

C. Protection of FEMA and Others

We may release your account information and other PII to appropriate third parties (including, but not limited to, legal authorities) when we believe such release is necessary to: comply with the law; enforce or apply our Terms of Service; or protect the rights, property, or safety of FEMA, our users, or any third parties (including, but not limited to, exchanging information with other companies and organizations for fraud protection and credit risk reduction).

D. Business Transfers

As we continue to develop and grow our business, FEMA may merge, sell or otherwise transfer some or all of our assets or business. Your PII may be one of the assets we transfer as part of such a transaction.

5. How Does FEMA Protect the Information We Receive?

We have taken certain physical, electronic, contractual and managerial steps to safeguard and secure the information we

collect from our users and store on our servers. We also use Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption software to protect the security of your information during transmission to us. However, no method of transmission over the Internet or method of electronic storage is 100% secure. Therefore, while we strive to use commercially acceptable means to protect your information, FEMA cannot and does not guarantee its absolute security.

You can also enhance your security by protecting against unauthorized access to your computer, and to your FEMA username and password. You should also be sure to sign-off our Website each time you finish using a shared computer.

6. How Can You Access and Change Your Information?

Upon request, we will allow you to access and change certain information about you (e.g., your FEMA username and password, contact information, transaction information and payment information) using the Support section of our Website.

7. Miscellaneous

A. Third Party Websites

Our Website may permit you to link to other third party websites on the Internet, and other websites may contain links to the FEMA Website. These third party Websites are not under FEMA's control. The privacy and security practices of websites linked to or from our Website are not covered by this Policy or the FEMA Terms of Service, and you should

carefully review the applicable third party terms. FEMA is not responsible for the privacy or security practices, or the content, of any such third party websites, and you specifically agree and acknowledge that FEMA will not have any liability in connection with any such third party websites. FEMA does not endorse, approve or sponsor any such third party websites unless expressly indicated by FEMA in writing.

B. No Use By Children

Our Website and services are not intended for use by children under 13 years of age; if you are under 13, you are not permitted to use our Website or services in any way. FEMA does not knowingly collect any Personally-Identifiable Information from any children under 13. If you have any concerns about privacy on the Website, please send an email to FEMA-New-Media@fema.dhs.gov and we will try to resolve it.

FEMA Smartphone App

By downloading the [FEMA App](#), the user agrees to the following terms:

For the Weather Alerts, the App transmits location data (County and State) selected by the user and a unique device token ID to FEMA to allow for personalized weather alerts. The App does not transmit any personal information associated with the device.

FEMA will make all reasonable attempts to keep this App bug free and up to date. However, this App and all information, content, and materials included on or otherwise made available to you through this App are provided by FEMA on an "as is" and "as available" basis. FEMA makes no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, as to the operation of this site or the information, content, or materials included on or otherwise made available to you through this App. You expressly agree that your use of this App is at your own risk. To the full extent permissible by applicable Federal law, FEMA disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including, but not limited to, implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. FEMA does not warrant that this App, information, content, or materials included on or otherwise made available to you through this App are free of viruses or other harmful components. FEMA will not be liable for any damages of any kind arising from the use of this App from any information, content, or materials included on or otherwise made available to you through this App, including, but not limited to direct, indirect, incidental, punitive, and consequential damages.

FEMA does not see, collect, or store any data you enter into the App. Any and all information you enter into the App is stored on your device and not on FEMA's website or server. As such, FEMA is not responsible for any damages resulting from the loss or theft of that information. However, please note that certain optional App features may transmit data.

The FEMA App uses Bing Maps, a Microsoft product. While Microsoft has advised FEMA that it does not collect any personal information, it does collect the number of times a

map is accessed via the mapping feature on the FEMA App. This information is not shared with FEMA. FEMA is not responsible for any information collected by Microsoft.

While FEMA does not charge for the use of this App, normal carrier data fees may apply. Please consult your carrier to discuss any charges related to the use of this App.

FEMA is a Federal Government entity and as such does not endorse any non-Government entities. You may not use this App or any of the information in this App to imply that FEMA endorse you or your organization.

This App should not be used to contact FEMA during an emergency. If you are in need of emergency assistance, please contact 9-1-1. If you need to register for FEMA assistance, please visit the www.disasterassistance.gov.

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