



U.S. Small Business Administration

DISASTER NEWS

Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses

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Disaster Assistance Available for Small Businesses

Sacramento, CA – Small, non-farm businesses in twelve California counties are now eligible to apply for low interest disaster loans from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These loans are to offset economic losses because of reduced revenue to farmers and ranchers caused by adverse weather conditions, announced Alfred E. Judd, SBA Disaster Area Director.

Small businesses in the following primary and adjacent counties may apply for economic losses that are attributable to the following incident dates and adverse weather conditions:

Colusa (adjacent counties of Butte, Glenn, Lake, Sutter and Yolo) – unseasonable high temperatures from March 12 through March 19, 2004.

Madera (adjacent counties of Fresno, Mariposa, Merced, Mono and Tuolumne) – drought from October 1, 2003 through May 25, 2004 and high winds and high temperatures from March 1 through March 31, 2004.

Small businesses may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$1.5 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred. “Eligibility for these working capital loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only, and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of about 3%, a maximum term of 30 years, and are restricted to small businesses without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship,” Judd said.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. Secretary Ann M. Veneman declared this disaster at the request of Henry Renteria, Director of the Office of Emergency Services, on behalf of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are ineligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency (FSA) about the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary’s declaration. However, in drought disasters, nurseries are eligible for SBA disaster assistance.

The deadline to apply for these loans is **April 11, 2005**.

For more information on SBA’s disaster assistance programs, individuals and business owners may call toll-free **(800) 488-5323**. Hearing impaired individuals may call **(916) 735-1683**.

For more information visit SBA’s website at www.sba.gov/disaster.

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