

DISASTER RESOURCES “WHAT DO I DO IF...?”

Below you will find a list of federal and state resources for those individuals who have been impacted by the flooding and blizzard situations we experienced this March. The list is broken down into questions farmers, ranchers, and others may be asking in the wake of this disaster. While not all inclusive, it is a best attempt at providing as much information to farmers and ranchers as we can.

Please note the importance of producing documentation when applying for any assistance.

What do I do if I'm feeling overwhelmed?

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed with stress, depression, or other mental health issues, please don't hesitate to call the Nebraska Rural Response Hotline at **1 (800) 464-0258**. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also has a Disaster Distress Helpline at **1 (800) 985-5990**.

What do I do if I've lost livestock/fencing or need hay/feed?

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP): LIP financially assists producers when they suffer loss of livestock due to adverse weather. To learn more about LIP, please click [here](#).

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish (ELAP): ELAP covers some livestock losses that do not fall under the LIP. ELAP may be applicable to financially assist with livestock feed losses, such as bales that may have been destroyed in the flood. To learn more about ELAP, please click [here](#).

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP): ECP can provide cost-share assistance to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters. It also can provide cost-share assistance to help restore fences damaged or lost due to natural disaster. **It is critical that producers, if they think they may want to access this cost-share resource, contact their county office about this program before taking any action to repair damages.** To learn more about ECP, please click [here](#).

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture as well as the University of Nebraska Extension Service are coordinating emergency hay, feed, and fencing needs. If you are in immediate need of these supplies, please call **(402) 471-4876**. You can also click [here](#) for more information.

What do I do with dead livestock?

Following the recent disaster event, Gov. Ricketts issued Executive Order 19-04 waiving the normal 36 hour requirement for burial of dead livestock. If utilizing on-site burial, the animal must be placed at least four feet below the surface of the ground. The utilization of burning and composting are also allowed under certain conditions. For more information, contact the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Waste Management Section: **(402) 471-4210** or click [here](#) for a DEQ factsheet detailing the regulations on livestock carcass disposal.

If you have found dead livestock on your property that doesn't belong to you, please contact DEQ at **(402) 471-2186** or **1 (877) 253-2603** (toll free). The Nebraska Department of Agriculture is also taking these types of calls at **1 (800) 831-0550**.

What do I do if my field is full of debris and/or sand?

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) is what farmers and ranchers would utilize in this situation. **If you are looking to utilize the ECP cost-sharing, make sure you call into your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office before you begin clearing your property.**

The **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** is also available to help producers recover and better withstand future flooding. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) plans to direct additional EQIP funds to cope with livestock lost due to flooding in Nebraska. To learn more about EQIP, click [here](#).

The **Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP)** program provides assistance to local sponsors (not individuals) with the cost of addressing watershed impairments or hazards like debris removal and streambank stabilization. Interested entities should contact [Allen Gehring](#), NRCS State Conservation Engineer at **(402) 437-4037**. To view a factsheet on the program, click [here](#).

What do I do if I lost stored grain?

At this time there isn't a program that covers on-farm stored grain that has been damaged due to natural disasters. Efforts are being made to provide coverage for these losses in the disaster aid package still working its way through Congress. Given the possibility of some level of coverage for these losses, farmers should maintain documentation of these losses that could be turned into USDA at a later date.

There are also specific DEQ rules regarding the disposal of damaged grain. Click [here](#) for more information on these rules.

What do I do if I think my private water well has been contaminated?

Flooded private water wells or wells suspected of being impacted by flooding should be tested to ensure that they are safe. If there is any indication that the water supply has been breached by flood waters, even without noticeable changes in taste or smell, residents are encouraged to test their well water. (Cloudiness or a change in taste or smell are signs of possible contamination.)

Residents with wells inundated in flood water are also advised to contact their local water well professional to shock treat their well or follow well treatment guidance from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln at <https://flood.unl.edu/> followed up by testing.

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and DEQ are offering free testing for total coliform and E.coli for samples submitted by private well owners. In addition, information about septic systems and disposal of solid wastes will also be available. Click [here](#) to learn more.

You should also contact your local Natural Resources District (NRD) as they may provide testing supplies free of charge.

What do I do if my home or business was destroyed?

Individuals can apply for grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Individuals and businesses who sustained losses can begin applying for assistance by registering online at www.disasterassistance.gov or by calling **1 (800) 621-3362** or **1 (800) 462-7585** TTY.