

Tropical Storm Fay Update 5:00 p.m.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials along with Florida Emergency Management officials, Bonita Springs and Lee County inspectors will visit all affected areas Saturday to assess the damage caused by Tropical Storm Fay. They will hold a news conference at 10:15 a.m. at Station 4, Bonita Springs Fire Department, 27701 Bonita Grande Drive.

The news conference contact is Debbie Redfield, Public Information Officer for Bonita Springs Fire Department, 239-851-3961. Points of discussion will include the assessment plan, dissemination of results and a possible re-entry plan to allow residents back into their homes when safe.

Flood water receded two inches in 8 of 9 measuring sites, but remains about three feet deep in areas. The flood water is unsafe due to a mixture of bacteria and chemicals. Hundreds of displaced residents are still being told to stay away from their neighborhoods because they can only access their homes through the contaminated standing water. Currently, 485 people are in the Red Cross shelter.

The federal assessment will determine if disaster survivors will be eligible for individual assistance under a Presidential major disaster declaration. Such assistance could include grants to meet unmet needs, rental assistance, low interest loans and temporary housing assistance. It can also include reimbursement for public assistance provided by the county, municipalities and other government agencies.

At this point, all specific needs have been addressed with material donations. Only monetary donations are being accepted to aid the flood victims. The Community Foundation is working with local banks to receive the donations. Residents and visitors should stay away from the flooded areas for their own safety and to prevent further damage to buildings and roads until after the FEMA report is released. Lee County remains under a State of Local Emergency and flood warning.

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