What is a Major Disaster Declaration?

Copyright Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Current as of: 11/12/2026

The President can declare a major disaster for any natural event, including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought, or, regardless of cause, fire, flood, or explosion, that the President determines has caused damage of such severity that it is beyond the combined capabilities of state and local governments to respond. A major disaster declaration provides a wide range of federal assistance programs for individuals and public infrastructure, including funds for both emergency and permanent work.

(Source: FEMA How a Disaster Gets Declared)

Copyright Vermont League of Cities and Towns
Current as of: 11/12/2026