



Dec. 23, 2020  
DR-4558-CA; DR-4569-CA FS 011  
Cal OES News Desk: 916-800-3943  
FEMA News Desk: 916-718-8540  
SBA: 916-847-2638

# Fact Sheet

## SBA Can Help with Mitigation Improvements

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – California residents whose home or property was damaged during the recent wildfires and who registered with FEMA for assistance may have been referred to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to apply for a low-interest disaster loan.

Survivors can find out more and apply for a loan at [DisasterLoanAssistance.sba.gov/](https://DisasterLoanAssistance.sba.gov/). Applicants also may call 800-659-2955 (TTY: 800-877-8339).

If the SBA loan application is approved, the applicant may be eligible for additional money to cover the cost of improvements that will protect the property against future damage. The device or measure must protect or mitigate against damage of the same kind that occurred during the 2020 wildfires. These wildfire are covered by the two presidential disaster declarations: DR-4558 (declared Aug. 22 and expanded later) and DR-4569 (declared Oct. 16 and expanded later).

Mitigation assistance must be added to a physical disaster loan within two years of the disaster declaration date.

Applicants may be eligible for an increase in their SBA property damage loan amount to pay for mitigation measures to make their property more resistant to future disaster damage.

Examples of eligible improvements include, but are not limited to:

- Retaining walls
- Sump pumps
- Grading and contouring land
- Elevating flood-prone structures
- Relocating utilities
- Retrofitting structures
- Safe rooms
- Storm shelters

It is not necessary for the description of the improvements and cost estimates to be submitted with the application. SBA must approve the mitigating measures before any loan increase.

Mitigation loan money would be in addition to the amount of the approved loan but may not exceed 20 percent of the total amount of physical damage to real property, including leasehold improvements and

personal property as verified by the SBA, to a maximum of \$200,000 for home loans. The applicant must have the ability to repay the loan.

If applicants receive a letter from local officials indicating their home was “substantially damaged,” they may need additional funds to complete repairs. For example, if the substantially damaged property must be elevated to the base flood elevation to comply with local ordinances, they may need to request an increase in SBA disaster loan funds to help with the increased cost of elevation. Since the SBA verifiers inspect disaster-damaged properties to estimate total physical loss, a ”substantial damage” letter from the local officials may help the damage estimate process.

For additional assistance, contact the SBA’s Virtual Disaster Loan Outreach Center. Customer service representatives are available to assist individuals and business owners, answer questions about SBA’s disaster loan program, explain the application process and help each person complete their electronic loan application. The Virtual DLOC is open 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. PST daily. Call 800-659-2955 (TTY: 800-877-8339) or email [FOCWAssistance@sba.gov](mailto:FOCWAssistance@sba.gov).

For more information about SBA mitigation measures, visit <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Documents/ODA-Disaster-Mitigation-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

For the latest information on wildfire recovery, visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4558> and <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4569> and follow the FEMA Region 9 Twitter account at <https://twitter.com/femaregion9>.

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