



U.S. Small Business Administration

# ***DISASTER NEWS***

*Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses*

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## **Disaster Assistance Available for Small Businesses Economically Impacted by Bozeman Explosion or Whitehall Fire and Explosion**

**Sacramento, CA** - The U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) today announced that economic injury disaster loans are now available to small businesses in Montana that were impacted by the recent explosion and fires in Bozeman and Whitehall. These low interest disaster loans are available to small businesses that have suffered financial losses caused by the March 5 explosion in Bozeman's downtown business district or the March 6 fire and explosion that destroyed several buildings in Whitehall.

SBA's disaster declarations make these low-interest economic injury disaster loans immediately available to help small businesses and most private, non-profit organizations meet financial needs caused by the disasters.

"The U.S. Small Business Administration is strongly committed to providing the most effective and customer-focused response possible to assist Montana's small businesses with federal economic injury disaster loans," said Acting Administrator Darryl K. Hairston. "Getting our small businesses up and running after a disaster is our highest priority at SBA."

Hairston's action responded to a March 23, 2009, request from Gov. Brian Schweitzer. Alfred E. Judd, Director of SBA's Disaster Field Operations Center - West, said SBA acted under its own authority to declare this disaster.

SBA is offering working capital loans of up to \$2 million at an interest rate of 4 percent with terms up to 30 years. "These loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other bills that can't be paid because of the disaster's impact. These loans can provide vital economic assistance to small businesses affected by the fires or explosion to help overcome the temporary financial impacts they are experiencing," said Michelle F. Johnston, SBA's Montana District Director.

"Due to the economic loss the disasters caused small businesses in Montana, we want to provide every available service to help get them back on their feet," Johnston continued. SBA is opening two Disaster Loan Outreach Centers where SBA customer service representatives will be available to meet individually with each business owner to explain how an SBA disaster loan can help finance their recovery. "We can answer your questions about SBA's economic injury disaster loan program, issue applications, explain the application process and accept your completed application," she said.

(more)

The outreach centers will be open at the following locations on the days and times indicated.

**BOZEMAN**

Downtown Bozeman Partnership  
224 East Main Street

Opens Wednesday, April 1 at 1 pm  
Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, & Fridays  
1 pm to 5pm

*Closes Thursday April 9 at 5pm*

**WHITEHALL**

Town Hall, Council Chambers  
2 North Whitehall Street

Opens Monday, March 30 at 1 pm  
Open Mondays & Tuesdays  
1 pm to 5pm

*Closes Tuesday, April 7 at 5 pm*

The disaster declarations approved by Acting Administrator Hairston covers the following primary Montana counties and neighboring counties in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming:

EIDL	Primary Counties	Neighboring Counties	Incident Type	Incident Date	Deadline
11696	Gallatin	Broadwater, Jefferson, Madison, Meagher and Park; Fremont in Idaho; Park & Teton in Wyoming	Explosion	March 5, 2009	Dec. 28, 2009
11697	Jefferson	Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Gallatin, Lewis and Clark, Madison, Powell & Silver Bow	Fire and Explosion	March 6, 2009	Dec. 28, 2009

Applicants may also apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) via SBA’s secure Web site at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

Disaster loan information and application forms may also be obtained from SBA’s Customer Service Center by calling toll-free (800) 659-2955, emailing [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov), or visiting SBA’s Web site at [www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance](http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance). Hearing impaired individuals may call (800) 877-8339.

The deadline to apply for these loans is December 28, 2009.