



# ***DISASTER NEWS***

*Economic Injury Loans for Small Businesses*

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## ***Press Release***

### ***Disaster Assistance Available for Small Businesses***

**Sacramento, CA** – Small, non-farm businesses in the California counties of **Alpine, Amador, El Dorado, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Mono, Monterey, Placer, Sacramento, San Benito, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara** and **Tulare**, and in the Nevada county of **Douglas** are now eligible to apply for low interest disaster loans from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA). These loans are to offset economic losses because of reduced revenue to farmers and ranchers caused by drought conditions in **El Dorado, Fresno** and **San Luis Obispo** counties from July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004, announced Alfred E. Judd, SBA Disaster Area Director.

“Eligibility for these working capital loans is based on the financial impact of the disaster only, and not on any actual property damage. These loans have an interest rate of 2.953%, a maximum term of 30 years, and are restricted to small businesses without the financial ability to offset the adverse impact without hardship,” he said.

Small businesses may qualify for Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) of up to \$1.5 million to help meet financial obligations and operating expenses which could have been met had the disaster not occurred.

By law, SBA makes EIDLs available when the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture designates an agricultural disaster. Secretary Ann M. Veneman declared this disaster at the request of Henry Renteria, Director of the Office of Emergency Services, on behalf of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Businesses primarily engaged in farming or ranching are ineligible for SBA disaster assistance. Agricultural enterprises should contact the Farm Services Agency (FSA) about the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) assistance made available by the Secretary’s declaration. However, in drought disasters nurseries are eligible for SBA disaster assistance.

Individuals and businesses unable to visit SBA’s disaster center may obtain information and loan applications by writing to SBA at P.O. Box 419004, Sacramento, CA 95841-9004, or by calling toll-free **(800) 488-5323**. Hearing impaired individuals may call **(916) 735-1683**.

The deadline to apply for these loans is **June 13, 2005**.

*For more information visit SBA’s website at [www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster).*

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