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**WILDFIRE VICTIMS IN 8 COUNTIES OF LONE STAR LEGAL AID'S SERVICE AREA MAY NOW
APPLY FOR DISASTER ASSISTANCE BENEFITS FROM FEMA**

--DEADLINE TO APPLY IS NOVEMBER 8, 2011--

Houston, Texas – September 20, 2011 – Lone Star Legal Aid (LSLA) urges those who were affected by the wildfires to apply for assistance with FEMA as soon as possible. As of September 19, 2011, FEMA has declared eight counties within the Lone Star Legal Aid service area as eligible for disaster assistance due to the extensive wildfire damage in those counties.

“Lone Star Legal Aid has extensive experience helping people document their eligibility for disaster assistance,” said attorney Sandra Brown, who manages LSLA’s Disaster Response Unit. “We are ready to help everyone we can and have begun recruiting volunteer pro bono attorneys to help us help others. Our hotline number is (800) 504-7030. Call us if you have questions or if your application is denied and you think it should have been accepted.”

FEMA added Colorado, Gregg, Grimes, Houston, Leon, Montgomery, Walker and Waller Counties from the LSLA service area to the disaster declaration list. That makes residents of those counties eligible for certain disaster assistance such as grants to help pay for temporary housing and essential home repairs to make a home habitable, grants for serious disaster-related expenses not covered by insurance and low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations to cover losses not fully compensated by insurance, according to FEMA.

“But you cannot get this help if you do not register with FEMA by November 8,” added Brown. “There is a short time to apply. Unless FEMA extends the deadline before you miss it, there are very few options once you miss that registration deadline. It is easy to register, you can do it online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov or by phone from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.”

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LSLA, with offices in Tyler, Nacogdoches, Longview, Houston, Bryan, Conroe, Angleton and six other cities across the eastern portion of the state, has successfully helped disaster victims navigate FEMA procedures and document eligibility for various disaster relief programs. The nonprofit firm works directly with eligible victims as well as with other groups who provide services after disasters. Residents who need assistance can call their local Lone Star Legal Aid office or the state-wide toll-free hotline at (800) 504-7030.

Helpful information has been updated by Lone Star Legal Aid and several other organizations in the [Disaster Relief](#) section of www.TexasLawHelp.org. LSLA will continue to post updates to its Facebook page and via Twitter (@LStarLegal) as more information becomes available about resources and responses to the fires.

Lone Star Legal Aid (www.LoneStarLegal.org) is the fourth largest service provider of free legal aid in the United States. LSLA serves an area that covers one-third of the state Texas, including over 63,000 square miles across 72 counties from Texarkana, to the Louisiana-Texas Gulf Coast state-line, down to Matagorda Bay, and four counties of southwest Arkansas. LSLA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the civil legal rights of low-income Texans by providing advocacy, legal representation and community education that ensures equal access to justice.

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