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DCA Announces Housing Recovery Information Session in Ocean County to Help Homeowners and Rental Property Owners Hard Hit by Superstorm Sandy

Information Session to be Held in Toms River on August 15th for Participants of the RREM, LMI, and LRRP Programs

Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs today announced the 45th Housing Recovery Information Session will be held Tuesday, August 15, 2017, in Toms River to assist storm-affected homeowners participating in the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) Program and the Low- to Moderate-Income (LMI) Homeowner Rebuilding Program, as well as rental property owners participating in the Landlord Rental Repair Program (LRRP).

The Information Session will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the L. Manuel Hirshblond Meeting Room of the Toms River Municipal Building, 33 Washington Street, to provide individualized, hands-on assistance to help eligible RREM Program, LMI Program and LRRP participants with any housing recovery questions or issues they might have.

“We encourage participants in our housing recovery programs to come to the Information Session if they have questions about their project. With experts on hand to provide answers and offer guidance, it is a great opportunity for participants to get the information they need to keep moving forward with their recovery,” said New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Charles A. Richman.

Approximately 2,650 participants have attended previous Information Sessions held since October 2014 in communities within the nine counties (Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, and Union) most impacted by Sandy, as determined by the federal government. This will be the fifth Information Session held in Toms River, one of the communities most impacted by the storm. Previous Information Sessions were held in Toms River in each of the three prior years. They have also been held in other Ocean County communities.

Representatives from the DCA’s Sandy Recovery Division and Housing Recovery Centers will be present at the Information Session, as well as RREM and LRRP Program Managers, who can answer specific questions about the RREM Program, LMI Program and LRRP. Additionally, representatives of the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs will be available to discuss best practices in selecting a reliable contractor to undertake rebuilding work.

Housing Counselors from the Sandy Recovery Housing Counseling Program will also be in attendance to offer RREM Program and LMI Program participants free HUD-certified housing counseling services for a wide array of housing-related issues, including foreclosure prevention, mortgages, budgeting, and rental guidance.

Furthermore, information will be available about the Rental Assistance Program (RAP), which helps homeowners in the RREM Program and LMI Program pay for temporary housing while their primary homes are being repaired, rebuilt or elevated. Through the RAP initiative, homeowners who have signed their grant agreement and meet other eligibility criteria are eligible for up to \$1,300 per month of rental assistance.

The \$1.3 billion RREM Program is the State's largest Superstorm Sandy housing recovery program. RREM provides grants to Sandy-impacted homeowners to cover rebuilding costs up to \$150,000 that are not otherwise funded by insurance, FEMA assistance, U.S. Small Business Administration loans, or other sources. Similarly, the \$50 million LMI Homeowner Rebuilding Program provides up to \$150,000 in reconstruction, rehabilitation and elevation assistance to Sandy-impacted homeowners of limited financial means who did not apply to the RREM Program. Together, the RREM and LMI programs have already rebuilt approximately 5,500 Sandy damaged homes.

The \$54 million LRRP Program provides up to \$50,000 per storm-damaged rental unit to assist eligible rental property owners in repairing their residential rental properties. To be eligible for the award, a landlord must rent the repaired unit(s) to LMI households after project completion. To date, approximately 375 units have been repaired and are now occupied by LMI households.

For more details about the Information Session, applicants may contact the DCA's Sandy Constituent Services Office by calling 609-292-3750 or by emailing sandy.recovery@dca.nj.gov.

For more information on the Sandy Recovery Housing Counseling Program and the Rental Assistance Program, people can visit www.renewjerseystronger.org/homeowners/sandy-recovery-housing-counseling-program/ and www.nj.gov/dca/hmfa/homeownership/owners/ssbg/indiw.formspub.previewex.shtml.

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