



FEMA

# News Release

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## **HELP AVAILABLE FOR SANDY SURVIVORS STRESSED BY HOLIDAYS**

**TRENTON, N.J.** — The holiday season can create its own stress. This stress can be especially trying for those recovering from Hurricane Sandy.

Free help is available just a phone call away for New Jersey survivors who feel overwhelmed during the holidays.

The New Jersey Disaster Mental Health Helpline at 877-294-4357 or TTY 877-294-4356 is open from 8 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week. Hours for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. All calls are free and confidential.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency also supports a Disaster Mental Health Helpline run by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration where counselors are available 24 hours a day including New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. The number is 800-985-5990.

Rest, exercise and healthy eating help the body deal with stress. But disaster-induced mental distress may include:

- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Stomach aches or headaches.
- Worrying a lot of the time; feeling guilty but not sure why.
- Lack of energy or always feeling tired.
- Severe disorientation or confusion.
- Overwhelming sense of guilt.
- Depression, sadness and feelings of hopelessness.
- Increased use of substances like drugs or alcohol.

Disaster survivors may doubt that happiness will ever be possible again. Talking about those feelings with friends or counselors can help.

Talking to someone can help survivors keep perspective. Eventually, these out-of-balance times will improve. In the meantime, it is important to connect with others.

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*FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.*

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