

COALITION SUPPORTS NEW DISASTER DASHBOARD TO ENHANCE RECOVERY PLANNING

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Getting access to data quickly post disaster is a crucial need for local governments and housing recovery partners to be able to identify survivors and provide assistance. To help local efforts, the Coalition partnered with Texas Applesseed to develop the first publicly-available interactive disaster housing dashboard based on data from OpenFEMA¹. Launched in February 2024, the Hurricane Idalia dashboard provided local governments and recovery organizations with access to aggregated FEMA data to understand impacted areas and enhance local repair and rental assistance efforts, and support more equitable recovery.

“The disaster housing dashboard is a much-needed resource to enhance targeted recovery assistance coordination,” said Ashon Nesbitt, CEO of The Florida Housing Coalition. “It can support an open and integrated analysis of recovery needs across impacted communities.”

In the fall 2023, the Coalition connected with Texas Applesseed, which had created the Disaster Equity Portal featuring past hurricanes. The Coalition provided recommendations on FEMA data sets that would be most useful for housing recovery analysis and planning for current storms.

“From our equity advocacy work, we knew there was a need to make FEMA data more publicly accessible,” said John Laycock, research analyst with Texas Applesseed who developed the tool. “The Idalia dashboard is an early model, but we think this type of tool can help identify population needs and support recovery planning.”

More than 150 people attended the launch in February. Additional webinars were held in April and training was provided at the Governor’s Hurricane Conference in May. Since the launch, the Coalition staff have used the dashboard in meetings with SHIP staff, recovery organizations, and disaster case management contractors.

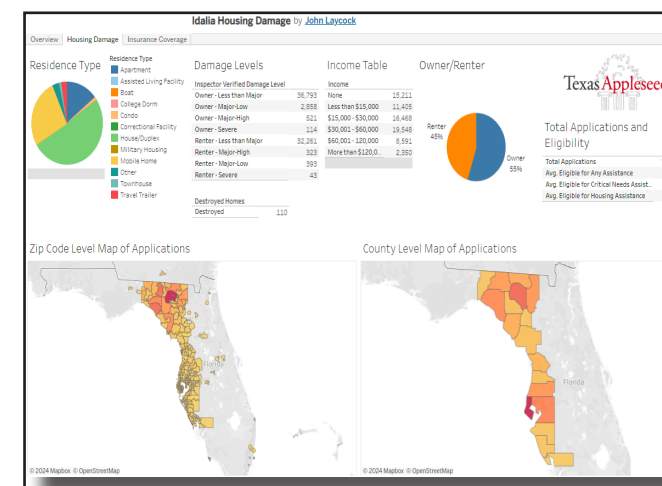
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UNDERSTANDING GAPS AND IMPACTS TO RENTERS

Using the Idalia dashboard, the Coalition evaluated renters earning less than \$30,000 living in single-family and manufactured housing who applied for assistance. The percentage of renters in single family homes, duplexes, and mobile homes was higher than the number of renters in multi-family properties. The Big Bend area had the largest number of renters in MHUs.

Because FEMA does not provide full damage assessment amounts on these rented properties, the housing damage picture is incomplete. This results in an incomplete projection and can potentially impact HUD CDBG-DR funding and potentially increased loss of rental units.

The Coalition has been able to work on this project and provide data assistance to SHIP offices with a grant from Bank of America. The Coalition is committed to creating data tools and resources to help local government housing staff and nonprofits strengthen and streamline disaster recovery programs. The Coalition Resilience and Recovery team plans to work with Texas and other partners to create a dashboard, if needed this hurricane season.



HOW TO USE THE DASHBOARD

The dashboard can be used to identify the number of impacted housing units by type - it includes 12 categories of housing, damage levels/categories for property and personal property, income levels, and filters by county and zip code. Information can be sorted by renter and owners. The interactive mapping feature is helpful for quickly identifying geographic concentrations. By selecting multiple counties, it can also provide a regional perspective of impacts and recovery needs. The tables dynamically update when a user clicks on a selected field.

The dashboard also includes a filter which shows categories/reasons of denial for FEMA assistance and patterns of higher denial rates in certain communities. That function is useful to legal services and non-profits who can allocate staff resources to support survivors in making appeals to FEMA.



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Disaster Housing Dashboard

¹ <https://www.fema.gov/about/reports-and-data/openfema>