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### **Maine SBDC Assists Small Businesses Affected by Floods**

**Aroostook County** – Business counselors from the Maine Small Business Development Centers (Maine SBDC) service center at Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) are offering assistance to small businesses in the aftermath of the recent spring flooding.

“The first thing we’ll tell business owners is that they must report their damage, whether or not it’s covered by insurance,” said Maine SBDC State Director, Mark Delisle. The federal government has yet to pronounce any Maine county as a disaster area to cover individual businesses. To do so, total damage must reach a certain dollar value. To report damage, small businesses should contact the Maine Emergency Management Administration by dialing 211.

“We want to make sure businesses are not only looking at the value of any physical damage but also assessing the likely impact to cash flow and lost revenues,” said Delisle, “Even businesses that suffered no physical damage may be affected if, for example, customers and suppliers are prevented from reaching them if roads are damaged.”

Knox, Lincoln, Penobscot and Waldo counties were also affected. County emergency management numbers are located at: [www.maine.gov/mema](http://www.maine.gov/mema)

According to Rod Thompson, Maine SBDC service center director at NMDC, many Aroostook County businesses are home-based enterprises, meaning that even flood damage to homes could have a significant impact on the small business economy. “The damage to homes can mean a direct economic loss to that family and the community,” said Thompson.

Maine SBDC staff will be directly contacting their current and former clients, particularly in the Fort Kent, Island Falls, and Van Buren areas, but Maine SBDC services are available to all small businesses who can reach the Maine SBDC service center at NMDC by calling 1-800-427-8736.

Aside from helping businesses identify and assess damage, Maine SBDC certified business counselors will also work with businesses on cash flow, financing and other strategies to restore stability.

Maine SBDC counselors have significant experience working with small businesses affected by disaster. For example, Maine SBDC certified business counselor, Gordon Platt, worked with small businesses in the aftermath of both the 2006 Mother’s Day and

2007 Patriot's Day Nor'easter storms and flooding that hit York County, where his Maine SBDC service center is located. Maine SBDC also garnered additional disaster experience when two of its counselors were deployed in 2005 to Mississippi in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina. Janet Roderick, from the Maine SBDC service center at Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, and David Hill, director of Maine SBDC's service center at Coastal Enterprises, Inc., in Wiscasset, spent 14 days assisting small businesses in Mississippi.

More information to help small business plan for or cope with disasters is available at [www.mainesbdc.org](http://www.mainesbdc.org)

***About Maine Small Business Development Centers/Maine Small Business & Technology Development Centers (Maine SBDC/SBTDC):*** *Maine SBDC/SBTDC is a partnership program of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) in association with the SBA/OSBDC, Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, the University of Southern Maine, and leading economic and/or community development hosting organizations, including the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, Coastal Enterprises, Inc., Eastern Maine Development Corporation, and the Northern Maine Development Commission and with support from the Maine Technology Institute (MTI) and other contractors, allies and stakeholders. Accredited by the Association of Small Business Development Centers (ASBDC) and administered by USM's School of Business, Maine SBDC/SBTDC operates a network of service centers and outreach offices located conveniently throughout the state. ###*