

Texas Workforce Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: May 5, 2006

CONTACT: Larry Jones

PHONE: (512) 463-8556

Disaster Aid Available to Kerr County Due to Wildfires

AUSTIN – According to the Texas Workforce Commission, individuals who worked in Kerr County and whose work was disrupted by extreme wildfire threats beginning December 1, 2005, may apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA 1624-DR. The claims filing deadline for those who lived or worked in Kerr County is May 31, 2006.

Kerr is the latest county added to the original declaration dated January 11, 2006, which included Callahan, Cooke, Eastland, Erath, Hood, Montague, Palo Pinto, Tarrant and Wise counties. Anderson, Bastrop, Deaf Smith and Parker counties were added to the declaration in March. Caldwell, Gray, Guadalupe, Hutchinson, Roberts and Wheeler counties were added in April.

Workers in counties that were part of the original Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA 1624-DR declaration on January 11, 2006, have been deemed eligible to apply for disaster coverage one week earlier. Those counties include Callahan, Cooke, Eastland, Erath, Hood, Montague, Palo Pinto, Tarrant and Wise. Now workers in those counties affected by extreme wildfire threat beginning November 27, 2005, and continuing may apply for DUA.

To be eligible for help under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA 1624-DR, you must:

- Have worked or been scheduled to work in the disaster area, but because of the disaster no longer have a job, a place to work in the area or you could not get to your place of work because of disaster damage
- Have been prevented from working by an injury or illness as a direct result of the disaster or
- Have become the head of the household and need employment because the head of the household died as a result of the disaster

Often, business owners who are self-employed are not aware of potential benefits to which they may be entitled. If you are self-employed, but have lost all or part of your livelihood as a result of this disaster, you may well be eligible for benefits.

To receive DUA benefits, individuals must provide documentation indicating an employment record at the time of the disaster or verification of the weeks the applicant was scheduled to work. TWC officials understand that because of property losses, some individuals may not have necessary information readily available. Each claim is considered individually. If you believe you may be eligible for assistance, you may file online at www.texasworkforce.org or call the TWC Tele-Center network at one of the numbers listed below Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., to talk with a representative or file a claim.

Austin local: (512) 340-4300
Dallas local: (214) 252-1200
El Paso local: (915) 832-6400
Fort Worth local: (817) 420-1600

Houston local (281) 983-1100
McAllen local (956) 984-4700
San Antonio local: (210) 258-6600
Others call toll free: (800) 939-6631

– more –

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

When applying for benefits, you should have available, when possible, your:

- Social Security number and
- Name and address of your last employer or prospective employer

Job seekers may visit Texas Workforce Centers for access to job-search resources, job postings and training programs, as well as assistance with exploring career options, résumé and application preparation, career development and more. Customers also may connect with potential employers through TWC's online job-search engine, www.WorkInTexas.com.

Workforce center services for employers include job posting and placement services, up-to-date information on the labor market and emerging occupations, and assistance with recruiting, retention, training, tax and hiring incentives. Employers can recruit new staff through www.WorkInTexas.com. Workforce centers also can offer employers the use of center office equipment and space when they are opening a new building in their respective areas.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.