

# Iowa's Disaster Case Management System a National Model

In order to help Iowans work their way through the maze of federal and state disaster recovery programs, a case management system was developed following the 2008 weather-related disasters. Now, that system has become a national model, there are even discussions at the federal level to incorporate the case management system into the federal disaster response.

The case management system used local organizations to work with disaster victims, helping them find the right federal and state programs to assist in their recovery. Since this was a first time effort, everyone acknowledges that it had its problems. However, for thousands of Iowans, it helped eliminate red tape and cut through the bureaucracy.

Although no one wants to see another disaster like the one Iowa experienced in 2008, the fact is that another flood is always a possibility. To make sure we have learned from the 2008 experience, the House Rebuild Iowa Committee approved legislation this week to make the case management system a permanent process available in the future.

The current Rebuild Iowa Office, which is to sunset in 2011, will lead the effort to set up the framework for the system working with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division. Once the framework is in place, DHS will be in charge if another disaster should occur.

## ***Business Case Management***

The legislation also creates a task force to work with business leaders to create a similar system for small and large businesses affected by future disasters. This component was missing in 2008.

House Study Bill 576 must now be considered by the full House and Senate before heading to the Governor for his signature.