



Young Lawyers  
Division

## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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Contact:

Wyoming State Bar  
4124 Laramie Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82001  
Phone: 855-445-8058  
Fax: 307-632-3737

Legal Aid of Wyoming Inc.  
1813 Carey Avenue  
Cheyenne, WY 82001  
Phone: 877-432-9955  
Fax: 307-432-0808

Equal Justice Wyoming  
2300 Capitol Avenue, 1st Floor  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
Phone: 307-777-8383  
Fax: 307-777-8382

## FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR WYOMING FLOOD VICTIMS

A toll-free legal aid hotline is now available for victims of the state's recently-declared disaster areas in Johnson County and Niobrara County. The service, which allows callers to request the assistance of a lawyer, is a partnership between the Wyoming State Bar and its Young Lawyers Section, Legal Aid of Wyoming Inc., Equal Justice Wyoming, the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Flood victims facing legal issues who are unable to afford a lawyer may call **1-877-432-9955** between 9:00am and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday, to request assistance. Messages can be left at any time. Callers should identify that they are seeking disaster-related legal assistance. Individuals who qualify for assistance will be matched with Wyoming lawyers who have volunteered to provide free legal assistance.

The type of legal assistance available includes:

- Assistance with securing FEMA and other government benefits available to disaster victims
- Assistance with life, medical and property insurance claims
- Help with home repair contracts and contractors
- Replacement of wills and other important legal documents destroyed in the disaster
- Assisting in consumer protection matters, remedies and procedures
- Counseling on mortgage-foreclosure problems
- Counseling on landlord-tenant problems



### Background:

When the President declares a major disaster, FEMA, in cooperation with the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, establishes a toll-free number for disaster victims to request legal assistance. Funding for the toll-free line comes from FEMA under the authority of Section 415 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 100-707). The American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division in turn partners with state bar associations and other legal organizations to recruit volunteer lawyers in affected areas to handle victims' cases.

Victims should be aware that there are some limitations on disaster legal services. For example, assistance is not available for cases that will produce a fee (i.e., those cases where attorneys are paid part of the settlement by a court). Such cases are referred to a local lawyer referral service.

### Partner Members:

The following organizations have joined forces to establish a toll-free phone line for Wyoming disaster victims to request free legal assistance and to provide volunteer attorneys to handle cases arising from recent flooding in Johnson County and Niobrara County.

**American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division** ([www.americanbar.org](http://www.americanbar.org)) – The ABA YLD, the largest national organization of young lawyers, provides leadership in serving the public and the profession, and promotes excellence and fulfillment in the practice of law. Its parent organization, the ABA, is the national voice of the legal profession and the largest voluntary professional membership group in the world.

**Wyoming State Bar** ([www.wyomingbar.org](http://www.wyomingbar.org)) – The mission of the Wyoming State Bar is to regulate the practice of law, facilitate the provision of quality legal services to the public, and assist attorneys in the professional practice of law. The Wyoming State Bar offers a number of services to the public, including referral services and a lawyer directory.

**Legal Aid of Wyoming Inc.** ([www.lawyoming.org](http://www.lawyoming.org)) – Legal Aid of Wyoming Inc. is a federally funded, non-profit law firm. Legal Aid provides legal assistance to low income individuals living in Wyoming. Legal Aid maintains offices in Cheyenne, Casper, Lander, and Rock Springs, and provides legal services throughout Wyoming.

**Equal Justice Wyoming** ([www.legalhelpwy.org](http://www.legalhelpwy.org)) - Equal Justice Wyoming is a judicial branch entity created under the Wyoming Supreme Court. Equal Justice Wyoming is charged with developing a statewide program for improving access to justice and providing civil legal services to Wyoming's low-income citizens.