

SPECIAL NOTICE

September 22, 2005

For further information contact:
Telephone Information Center
1-800-647-7706 or (360) 705-6676

Alternate Formats (360) 705-6715
Teletype 1-800-451-7985

No Sales Tax Due on Purchases Made With American Red Cross Cash Assistance Cards or FEMA Debit Cards Issued to Hurricane Victims

Hurricane victims purchasing goods and other taxable items in Washington State should not be charged sales tax on their purchases when using Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) debit cards or American Red Cross cash assistance cards.

Restaurants, retailers and hotels, among other merchants, should treat these sales as tax-exempt purchases by a federal agency or the non-profit American Red Cross.

Merchants are encouraged to issue sales tax refunds, if possible, on any prior sales to hurricane victims that were made with the FEMA debit card or the American Red Cross cash assistance card.

FEMA Debit Card Overview:

Each FEMA debit card has a BIN associated with it to identify the card. This BIN should be 511393 or 511178. Also look for the following:

- Some cards have a blue background, Chase logo in upper left-hand corner, Chase E-funds text, and a globe;
- Some cards have a “We the People Wavy Flag” background on them; and
- Some cards have an eCount logo, not a Chase logo.

Other than the artwork and 800 number, the cards will have identical attributes to the batch of blue background cards: same BIN (511393), same exact networks (MasterCard, NYCE, PULSE, CIRRUS, Maestro, Allpoint) and same embossing (“FEMAAssistance”).

Example of American Red Cross Cash Assistance Card



Example of FEMA Debit Card

To inquire about the availability of this document in an alternate format for the visually impaired, please call (360) 705-6715. Teletype (TTY) users please call 1-800-451-7985.