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Major Disaster Declarations

Bell County

Julie N. Zimmerman and Jeff Young, 2026



Kentucky: By The Numbers
<https://kybtn.mgcafe.uky.edu>

Between 2015 through September 2025 (not including COVID-19), Kentucky had 22 Major Disaster Declarations affecting counties all across the state. While 2025 had not ended yet when these data were accessed, during those 10 years, 2015 was the most active year with 4 Major Disaster Declarations. To learn more about a specific event, the “Disaster Number” provides a unique identifier that can be used in an online search.

There are several different types of disaster declarations. This issue of Kentucky: By the Numbers provides data on the number of “Major Disaster Declarations.” This type of declaration provides access to the widest array of resources. For more information, see “How a Disaster Gets Declared” at <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/how-declared>

Year	Number of Major Disaster Declarations that included Bell County <i>(not including COVID-19)</i>
2015	1
2016	0
2017	0
2018	1
2019	1
2020	1
2021	1
2022	0
2023	1
2024	1
2025 <i>(through Sept)</i>	1
Total	8

Major Disaster Declarations in Kentucky <i>(not including COVID-19)</i>			
Year	Disaster Number	Number of Counties	Incident Type
2015	4216	41	Snowstorm
	4217	29	Flood
	4218	59	Flood
	4239	34	Severe Storm
2016	4278	20	Severe Storm
2018	4358	22	Flood
	4361	35	Flood
2019	4428	61	Severe Storm
2020	4540	27	Severe Storm
2021	4592	45	Severe Ice Storm
	4595	50	Flood
	4630	23	Tornado
2022	4643	13	Severe Storm
	4663	20	Flood
2023	4702	88	Severe Storm
	4711	22	Flood
2024	4782	11	Severe Storm
	4804	58	Severe Storm
	4848	34	Tropical Storm (Hurricane Helene)
2025 <i>(through Sept)</i>	4860	69	Severe Storm
	4864	91	Severe Storm
	4875	39	Severe Storm

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Number of Times County included in a Major Disaster Declaration from 2015 through September 2025 *(not including COVID-19)*



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Data Source

These data were compiled using the OpenFEMA Dataset: Disaster Declarations Summaries - v2 (Last Data Refresh: 09-29-2025). "This dataset lists all official FEMA Disaster Declarations, beginning with the first disaster declaration in 1953... This is raw, unedited data from FEMA's National Emergency Management Information System (NEMIS)." <https://www.fema.gov/openfema-data-page/disaster-declarations->

Kentucky: By The Numbers is an Extension program in the Department of Community and Leadership Development at the University of Kentucky. For more information contact your local Cooperative Extension office or Dr. Julie N. Zimmerman, Professor of Rural Sociology, Department of Community and Leadership Development, 500 Garrigus Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40546-0215. email: jzimm@uky.edu. The entire series is online at <https://kybtn.mgcafe.uky.edu>

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