

# High Heat and Crop Insurance – Claims Process

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Record-high temperatures continue this week across the Midwest and harvest is right around the corner for spring planted crops. This extreme heat has the potential to impact yields negatively in which a Notice of Loss needs to be filed. If you suspect damage has occurred and need to initiate a claim, there are a few steps that need to be taken. First, call your agent and notify them of the damage. I also recommend sending a text message and/or email to the agent; this can be kept for your records as well. In some situations, discovery of the loss may occur during harvesting. In this case, stop harvesting the crop and contact your agent immediately to discuss the necessary course of action.

*“Before you turn a wheel out there, call me.”* I’ve said this phrase many times throughout my career as an underwriter, account specialist, and managing agent. **Translation: If you are anticipating a loss or something has happened, please let me know before you do anything to the crop. That way we can let the AIP know what is happening and get an adjuster out there if necessary.** If a crop is destroyed before an adjuster has an opportunity to inspect, this could result in the claim being denied and the indemnity becoming forfeit. Be advised, that failure to follow Good Farming Practices, negligence, and abandonment are **NOT** covered under your crop insurance policy and these cannot be done without prior permission from the adjuster or AIP.

The policyholder or authorized representative must notify the crop insurance agent within 72 hours from the initial time of discovery of damage or loss of production, but no later than 15 days after the end of the insurance period, even if the crop has not yet been harvested (by unit, for each insured crop in a county). Crops covered under a Revenue Protection (RP) policy, must be reported no later than 45 days after the last date the harvest price is released for any crop in the unit when there is a revenue loss. The harvest price begins tracking during October for both corn and soybeans and is released in early November.

In practice, there are different levels of urgency for a crop insurance adjuster depending on conditions, intentions, and stages of the growing season. Once a claim has been filed, the Approved Insurance Provider (AIP) will make the arrangements to process the claim. The AIP is responsible for all loss adjustment responsibilities outlined in the Loss Adjustment Manual (LAM) and will be performed by a contracted adjuster, employed adjuster, or other AIP employees. The USDA and Risk Management Agency (RMA) offers agricultural producers protection against losses due to but not limited to: **HEAT, DROUGHT**, Freeze, Hail, Wind, Disease, Excess Precipitation, Flood, and Revenue.

A claim professional will contact the policyholder or authorized person to schedule an inspection. The adjuster assigned to the claim may take pictures, consult local weather data, and converse with other adjusters or neighboring growers on the conditions of the crops. The grower or authorized person is welcome and expected to participate during these inspections to assist in the loss process.

Communication during the claims process between the policyholder, adjuster, and crop insurance agent is essential. If for any reason you have concerns regarding the overall outcome of your claims, talk with your crop adjuster or agent before signing the claim document to finalize the loss. Given the growing conditions for the 2023 season, we are anticipating harvest/revenue losses. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Peoples Company and we will be happy to assist.