

GOVERNOR CULVER REQUESTS PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION

State Individual Assistance Program now available

DES MOINES – Governor Chet Culver has asked President Obama to declare 27 Iowa counties federal disaster areas after severe winter storms caused extensive damage in recent weeks. At a press conference this morning, the Governor spoke about the recent snow and ice storms, the state's response, and how Iowa is working with federal partners to provide much-needed relief for those affected by the storms.

“The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, working with FEMA, has done an outstanding job in gathering preliminary damage assessments,” said Governor Culver. “We must continue our efforts. I am committed to doing everything I can to help Iowans affected by the storms get back on their feet.”

While final assessments are still in progress, there is at least \$26 million in damage statewide.

Governor Culver signed two letters to be forwarded to President Obama requesting he designate these affected areas as a Presidentially Declared Major Disaster. If granted, the state could be eligible for public assistance in the coming weeks.

The Governor also announced today the State Individual Assistance Program is now available to those affected by the ice storm earlier this month. The state's Individual Assistance Program provides up to \$5,000 in reimbursements for damages incurred for those whose income is up to 200% above the poverty level. The program is available to those in the counties under the Governor's emergency proclamation for the storm: Audubon, Carroll, Cass, Crawford, and Sac. For more information on the state's Individual Assistance Program, visit the Department of Human Services' website (www.dhs.state.ia.us) and click on Storm Help, or call 877-937-3663.

The Governor also reminded Iowans that state assistance is available to those who feel they have been unfairly taken advantage of due to the storm. If Iowans believe they had been a victim of price gouging, they are encouraged to visit the Attorney General's website at http://www.state.ia.us/government/ag/protecting_consumers/Storm_Warnings.html or call 888-777-4590.

Finally, if Iowans have immediate needs, they are encouraged to call the Iowa Concern Hotline at 800-447-1985, which can help put them in touch with services providers.

Attached is a map detailing the areas being requested for a Presidential Disaster Declaration by Governor Culver. Below is an outline of the state services that have been provided to date to help address the response and recovery after the January ice storm.

State Assistance in Response to January 19th Ice Storm

Statewide: Proclamation lifting service hour and weight limit restrictions providing aid to power companies to import supplies and restore power as quickly as possible.

All proclaimed counties:

- Activation of the Iowa individual assistance program
- Coordination with Safeguard Iowa Partnership on providing generator resources for farmers with livestock operations
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Calhoun: Inmate assistance for debris removal

Carroll:

- 6 Generators to support locations including New Hope Village and sheltering;
- Coordination of county to county mutual aid request;
- Inmate assistance for debris removal;
- Use of state Saw Team to assist in debris break down and removal;
- 24 DOT dump trucks and 8 grapplers to assist in debris removal
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Cass: Inmate assistance for debris removal

Sac:

- DOT support in clearing roads to assist power restoration;
- Coordinated use of cots and blankets from the Red Cross for shelters;
- 2 Generators to support sheltering;
- Use of ING Armory in Storm Lake to house electrical restoration crews;
- Use of state Saw Team to assist in debris break down and removal

Additionally, the state's anti-price-gouging rule is in effect in counties where disaster emergency proclamations have been issued. Complaints about possible price gouging may be brought to local authorities or to the Attorney General's Office -- 515-281-5926, or toll-free at 888-777-4590.

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