

Governor Quinn Declares 38 Counties State Disaster Areas

Written by Brooke Anderson
Monday, 22 April 2013 15:08

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Disaster Declaration Issued to Ensure Continued Support for Affected Areas

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Pat Quinn today declared 38 counties state disaster areas after surveying flood damage caused by several days of severe storms and heavy rainfall across much of Illinois. The disaster declaration will accelerate and expand access to state emergency resources as well as allow the state to formally pursue federal relief and support. Flash flooding and rapidly rising rivers and streams have forced evacuations, damaged or destroyed homes and businesses, caused power outages and closed numerous roads.

“Illinois has seen an incredible level of devastation and reports indicate that conditions will get worse in the coming days,” Governor Quinn said. “We want to ensure that every county gets the assistance they need and this declaration will give every affected community access to available resources. As we wait for the floods to pass, all Illinois residents should continue to take precautions, and stay off the roads if possible.”

Counties included in the Governor’s declaration include: Adams, Brown, Bureau, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Champaign, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Fulton, Greene, Grundy, Hancock, Henderson, Henry, Jersey, Jo Daviess, Kane, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, Marshall, Mason, McHenry, Mercer, Morgan, Peoria, Pike, Putnam, Rock Island, Schuyler, Scott, Tazewell, Whiteside, Will, Winnebago and Woodford.

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The state disaster declaration makes available a wide variety of state resources that can help affected communities respond and recover from flooding. The state of Illinois has personnel and assets that can be mobilized to help local government officials with disaster recovery, including trucks, heavy equipment and work crews to speed debris removal, and provide assistance with security and other public safety issues. The state disaster declaration comes after assessments by emergency officials and the governor, and will begin the process of securing federal relief.

On Thursday morning, Governor Quinn was briefed on the state's flood assistance efforts at the State Incident Response Center (SIRC) in Springfield. He later surveyed damage on the ground and met with local officials in Elmhurst, Des Plaines, River Forest and Westchester.

The SIRC was activated Thursday morning and will remain operational as long as necessary. Liaisons from several state agencies are working with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to coordinate the deployment of state personnel and assets to assist local governments in the affected areas. As of late Thursday, assistance provided in response to requests from local government included water pumps and Illinois Department of Corrections inmates filling sandbags.

For flood safety information and real-time updates, please visit Ready.Illinois.gov . For traffic updates please visit GettingAroundIllinois.com/gai.htm

The state's response to the floods includes:

- Illinois Department of Transportation is ensuring public safety through road closures, message boards and other road-closure assistance to affected communities.
- Illinois National Guard is coordinating with IEMA in the event troops are needed to assist flooded communities.

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- Illinois Department of Central Management Services is monitoring conditions at state facilities to ensure state agencies can continue to provide critical services to the public and is prepared to procure flood-fighting supplies if needed.
- Illinois Department of Corrections had 30 inmates at the Pittsfield Work Camp in Pike County assist with filling sandbags for local public safety officials.
- Illinois Department of Public Health is providing local public health departments, hospitals and medical offices in the affected areas with information on tetanus shots.
- Illinois State Police is assisting motorists stranded by floodwaters and working with local public safety officials on road closures.
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency is coordinating the state's response and has deployed staff throughout the affected areas to assist local officials.
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources dispatched conservation officers to Sycamore to assist with evacuation of residents in a flooded mobile home park.
- Office of the State Fire Marshal is coordinating with fire departments throughout the state to assess any flood-related issues they're experiencing.
- American Red Cross has opened shelters in Roanoke, Oglesby and Lisle and is continuing to assess the need for shelters and other assistance.

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