

Governor Quinn Requests Federal Aid for 15 Tornado-Ravaged Counties

Written by Grant Klinzman
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Nearly 1,000 Uninhabitable Homes Across Illinois; 2,441 Homes Damaged by Tornadoes

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today asked President Barack Obama to declare 15 Illinois counties major disaster areas to help people and businesses recover from a violent outbreak of tornadoes across the state on Nov. 17. Governor Quinn requested a federal disaster declaration for Champaign, Douglas, Fayette, Grundy, Jasper, LaSalle, Massac, Pope, Tazewell, Vermilion, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, Will and Woodford counties.

“The lives of thousands of people across Illinois were torn apart by this deadly outbreak of tornadoes,” Governor Quinn said. “We expedited the damage assessment process in order to submit this request and the required documentation as soon as possible. I encourage President Obama to quickly approve this request and help our communities recover and rebuild.”

Governor Quinn made the request after five teams comprising personnel from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and local officials assessed damage in the 15 counties hit by the Nov. 17 tornadoes and severe storms. The teams identified 2,441 homes that were damaged, including 781 homes that were destroyed. The teams completed their assessments in less than four days.

If Governor Quinn’s request is approved, people in the approved counties would be eligible to

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apply for grants and low-interest SBA loans. In addition, affected businesses would be able to apply for low-interest SBA loans.

Representatives from IEMA and FEMA will meet with local government officials beginning in early December to document expenses related to the tornadoes and storms, including emergency protective measures, debris removal and repair or replacement of roads, bridges and other public facilities. That information could be used to support a request for federal assistance to help state and local governments recoup a portion of eligible tornado-related expenses.

Under the Governor's direction, the state continues to support recovery efforts in several communities hard hit by the tornadoes. The State Incident Response Center in Springfield is activated to coordinate deployment of state assets and personnel in response to requests from affected areas.

Trucks and heavy equipment from the Illinois Department of Transportation and inmate crews from the Illinois Department of Corrections continue to assist with removal of massive amounts of debris in communities. IEMA personnel were deployed to impacted communities, where they continue to coordinate with local officials on a variety of disaster-related issues. The state also continues to provide law enforcement officers to assist with security and other issues in affected communities.

Several state and local agencies are helping tornado survivors with a variety of issues at Multi-Agency Resources Centers (MARC) set up in Washington and Brookport through Tuesday. The Illinois departments of Human Services, Insurance and on Aging have staff at both MARCs, and the Secretary of State's Office will be on hand to help residents with driver's licenses, vehicle registration and other issues.

The American Red Cross will provide client casework, information and referrals. More than 20 local disaster relief agencies will also be there to provide assistance and give people much needed information about their recovery process. Additionally, there will be bulk distribution of a variety of items.

For more information about disaster recovery resources, including shelters and ways to help

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tornado survivors, visit Ready.Illinois.gov .

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