



NJ Office of Emergency Management

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Governor Christie Announces State-Fema Damage Assessments To Begin Today

TRENTON N.J. – The Christie Administration announced today that the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (OEM), in coordination with FEMA and county emergency management partners, will begin Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA's) to assess damages from the severe storms which impacted Southern New Jersey on June 30, 2012. Storm conditions required emergency shelters and cooling centers to be established, housing hundreds of evacuees as many residents suffered prolonged power outages and major damage to their residences. Torrential rain and downed trees affected the roadways necessitating dozens of road closures throughout the state. There were at least three confirmed fatalities due to the storms.

The Damage Assessments will be conducted in Atlantic and Cumberland Counties for Individual Assistance and Public Assistance. Damage Assessments will be conducted in Salem County for Public Assistance only. There remains a possibility of additional counties to be added as assessments are being conducted. The PDA process is used to determine the impact and magnitude of damage caused by a disaster. It summarizes resulting needs of individuals, businesses, the public sector, and the community as a whole. Collecting, evaluating, and documenting damages through joint assessments are the critical first steps in the process for obtaining federal assistance for impacted New Jerseyans and governments.

The Joint PDA Teams are comprised of personnel from OEM, FEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and county and local emergency management agencies. The teams will review the types of damage or emergency costs incurred by the State and the impact to critical facilities and infrastructure, including: roads, bridges, public utilities, hospitals, schools, and fire and police departments.

The team will also assess the impact on individuals and businesses, including the extent of the damage, the number of people displaced, and the threat to health and safety caused by the incident. Additional data from the Red Cross or other local voluntary agencies may also be reviewed. During the assessment, the team will document eligible estimates of the expenses and damages.

PDAs are the first step in determining whether the disaster is of such severity and impact that it is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments, and that Federal assistance is necessary. The PDA is typically used as a basis for a State Governor's Request for a Major Disaster and it shows the cost of response efforts, such as emergency personnel overtime, other emergency services, and damage to public and private property that is beyond State and local recovery capabilities. The President considers the PDA a principal factor in making a determination whether to declare a Major Disaster in response to the Governor's request.

All residents and businesses that have experienced damage to their property as a result of the storm are advised to contact their insurance company and open a claim for damages. All municipal and county officials should continue to work with their respective

offices of emergency management and gather data/damage reports to be forwarded to the State for review.

Persons with unmet needs should contact 2-1-1, New Jersey's Helpline. For more information regarding disaster recovery and the PDA process please access the following web resources: NJ 2-1-1 Call Center: Call 2-1-1 or click www.nj211.org; Free 24-hour statewide service - putting people in need of assistance, in-touch with people who can help. Disaster Related Stress: NJ Disaster Mental Health Helpline - Emotional support for people affected by disasters or other overwhelming events is available by calling New Jersey Mental Health Cares' Disaster Mental Health Helpline toll free at (877) 294-HELP (4357), where experienced crisis counselors can be reached.

A TTY line is also available at (877) 294-4356.

FEMA Background Information: www.fema.gov

Disaster Declaration Process: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/dproc.shtm>

PDA's: <http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/pda.shtm>

Individual Assistance Info: http://www.fema.gov/assistance/process/individual_assistance.shtm

Public Assistance Info: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/index.shtm>

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