

President Declares Parts of Iowa Disaster Areas

In the past few days, President Obama has declared 22 Iowa counties as winter storm disaster areas. Twenty-one of the counties were affected by both the severe winter storms, beginning with the December 23, 2009, storm and the January ice storms. The declarations were requested by Governor Culver.

Because of these declarations, federal assistance will become available to state and local governments and certain non-profit organizations, including rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities. It will cover emergency work and repair or replacement of damaged facilities and provide public assistance to rebuild damaged infrastructure including roads, bridges, culverts, and other public facilities, or to cover costs of emergency work during the storms.

Counties included in the winter storm declaration are Adair, Audubon, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Cherokee, Clay, Crawford, Emmet, Franklin, Fremont, Guthrie, Harrison, Ida, Monona, Page, Pottawattamie, Sac, Shelby, Sioux, and Woodbury.

The President also declared Adair, Audubon, Calhoun, Carroll, Cass, Crawford, Guthrie, Harrison, Madison, Pottawattamie, Sac, and Shelby counties as disasters due to the ice storms that began on January 19.

The declarations also provide for reimbursement for 48 hours of continuous operations for snow removal assistance for Cherokee, Clay, Emmet, Fremont, Harrison, Ida, Page, Pottawattamie, Sioux, and Woodbury counties.

The Presidential Disaster Declaration includes funding to conduct hazard mitigation activities for the entire state. With this funding, Iowa will be able to minimize the impact of future natural disasters by taking steps now to strengthen existing infrastructure.