

June Storms Lead to Disaster Proclamations

So far, it has not gotten to the 2008 level, but continued severe storms have created emergency situations in a number of Iowa counties. As a result, Governor Chet Culver has issued a disaster emergency proclamation for Hancock, Wright, Ringgold, Union, and Taylor counties following recent storms.

This proclamation allows both residents and local officials to receive help in recovering from the impact of the storm. For example, cities will be able to receive assistance for debris removal of damaged structures and trees.

In addition, the state's Individual Assistance Grant Program can help eligible residents of the five counties. The program provides up to \$5,000 in reimbursements for damages for families whose income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. For a family of four, that would be \$44,100 a year.

For more information on the 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.

Presidential Declaration Sought in Des Moines and Lee counties

Governor Culver has also asked President Barack Obama for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for Des Moines and Lee counties in southeast Iowa. The request is based on damages caused by storms in mid-May that resulted in flooding, including flash flooding. Governor Culver has already issued a disaster proclamation making individual assistance available in Des Moines County.

A Presidential Declaration would provide funding under the Public Assistance Program to rebuild damaged infrastructure for public and certain non-profit agencies.

An assessment by Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and local emergency management staff found that the severe weather caused an estimated \$4.8 million in eligible damages in the two counties.

The declaration request goes to the FEMA office in Kansas City and then to FEMA headquarters in Washington, D.C. where it must be reviewed before going on to the White House.

Governor Culver is continuing to review information from local officials in other areas of the state to determine if damages warrant additional requests for federal assistance.