



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Thursday, March 1, 2012

Governor Quinn Requests FEMA Help with Tornado Damage Assessments in Southern IL

Documentation Will Support Request for Federal Assistance

SPRINGFIELD – March 1, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to assist with damage assessments in several Southern Illinois counties devastated by tornadoes and severe storms early Wednesday morning. The assessments, which will begin on Monday, will provide the documentation necessary to support a request for federal assistance.

“I’ve seen the destruction firsthand and it is critical that we get needed resources to our impacted communities right away,” Governor Quinn said. “We must do everything possible to expedite this process and jumpstart our recovery in Southern Illinois.”

Personnel from FEMA, IEMA, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and local emergency management agencies will begin assessing damage to homes and businesses on Monday. The assessments, which are expected to be completed by the end of the week, will be conducted in Gallatin, Massac, Perry, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Union and Williamson counties.

“We’ll work closely with FEMA to complete the damage assessments as quickly as possible,” said Jonathon Monken, director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). Monken said IEMA will have staff in the area over the weekend to meet with local officials in preparation for the damage assessments.

Immediately after surveying the damage and meeting with residents, local officials and first-responders in Harrisburg on Wednesday, Governor Quinn issued a state disaster proclamation for the southern third of Illinois. The declaration ensures that state resources and personnel are available to assist with response and recovery efforts. A state disaster declaration is also needed in order to request federal assistance.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Springfield remains activated to coordinate state assistance to the affected areas. Representatives from several state agencies, including the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Central Management Services, Illinois Commerce Commission, Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois Department of Corrections and Illinois Emergency Management Agency, are stationed at the SEOC to manage requests for assets, personnel and resources from their departments.

Friday’s weather forecast for Southern Illinois calls for the potential for more severe storms, and the state is encouraging people to take steps now to prepare. In addition to an emergency preparedness kit stocked with bottled water, non-perishable food, flashlight, batteries and a first aid kit, Monken said a NOAA weather alert radio is a critical preparedness tool. The radios receive watches and warnings 24 hours a day and can alert people to approaching danger in time for them to get to a safe place.

More information about weather alert radios and severe weather preparedness is available on the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.



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