



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

# NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **Governor Quinn Requests Federal Assistance for Five Southern Illinois Counties**

*Federal Disaster Declaration Would Help People, Businesses  
Recover from Tornadoes, Severe Storms*

SPRINGFIELD – March 7, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today asked President Barack Obama to declare five Southern Illinois counties major disaster areas to help people and businesses recover from devastating tornadoes and severe storms that struck the area Feb. 29. Counties requested include Gallatin, Randolph, Saline, Union and Williamson.

“We need federal aid in order to help these communities recover, which is why we worked to document the damage and submit this request for federal assistance,” Governor Quinn said. “I ask President Obama to approve this request that will help the people of Southern Illinois recover from this devastating storm.”

Earlier this week, damage assessment teams from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and affected communities documented the extent of damage to homes and businesses. That assessment found that 104 homes were destroyed by severe storms and tornadoes; 50 suffered major damage, and 276 others also were seriously damaged.

In addition, 10 businesses in Saline County sustained major damage, while 23 others were also affected by the storms.

If Governor Quinn’s request is approved, residents in the approved counties would be eligible to apply for grants and low-interest SBA loans. Affected businesses would be also able to apply for low-interest SBA loans.

Representatives from IEMA and FEMA will meet with local government officials beginning March 12 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 75 percent of eligible flood-related expenses.

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