

Governor Murphy Announces Resilience Funding to Assist Homeowners Impacted by December Flooding

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TRENTON — Governor Phil Murphy today announced that he has instructed the State Hazard Mitigation Team to earmark \$10 million in Fiscal Year 2024 FEMA “Swift Current” resilience funding to aid homeowners who were heavily impacted by flooding in December, particularly in the Passaic River Basin.

“Extreme weather events and flooding continue to leave New Jersey families grappling with devastating damage. We have made it a priority to bolster our state’s resiliency against these storms, ensuring that we address the painful cycle of repairing and rebuilding flood-prone homes after every flood event,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Earmarking these funds will give affected homeowners an opportunity to protect their property from future disasters.”

The Swift Current funding will be dedicated to elevating and/or buying out flood-insured properties in the areas most-heavily impacted by the December floods, particularly in Essex, Passaic, and Morris Counties. The Office of Emergency Management is also conducting initial damage assessments to determine if areas impacted by the storm are eligible for a Presidentially Declared Disaster that would provide FEMA Public Assistance or Small Business Administration Disaster Loans. These damage assessments have not confirmed eligibility for Public Assistance or Disaster Loans to this point, so the Swift Current funding serves as a vital resource for homeowners to better protect their properties from future damages.

“This is excellent news for those residents who live in the Passaic River Basin that were impacted by the recent flooding in the December storms,” **said Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, State Director of Emergency Management and Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. “With this allocated funding, led by the State Hazard Mitigation Team, Governor Murphy’s Disaster Recovery Office, and partnerships with local governments, assistance is available to help protect against future flooding events and support the needs of our residents.”

“DCA acknowledges the profound hardships that families in affected communities have endured due to last month’s flooding,” **said Department of Community Affairs Acting Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez**. “The Department of Community Affairs is supporting these families, drawing on past initiatives of elevating over 6,000 homes after Superstorm Sandy and the Department’s ongoing work to elevate homes through our Mitigation Assistance Program. Recognizing the efficacy of home elevation as a strategy to enhance protection against flooding events, we are eager to continue to collaborate with Governor Murphy and our fellow state agencies. Our focus is centered on the efficient utilization of FEMA Swift Current funding, aiming to assist as many individuals as possible in mitigating against potential disasters in the future.”

“These additional investments in flood protection are another reflection of Governor Murphy’s commitment to helping New Jersey communities become more resilient to the impacts of extreme weather and climate change,” **said Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette**. “Through the nationally recognized Blue Acres buyout program expanded by Governor Murphy in 2022, the Department of Environmental Protection will help affected homeowners who wish to relocate and create green space that provides critical nature-based flood protection for these communities.”

Governor Murphy re-constituted the State Hazard Mitigation Team as part of Executive Order No. 344 in October of 2023. Led by the Governor’s Disaster Recovery Office and the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, the State Hazard Mitigation Team’s mission is to coordinate and efficiently utilize hazard mitigation funding to better protect homes and critical infrastructure around the state in response to disaster events. Eligible flood-prone homes that were affected in the recent December storms will be sought out through partnerships with the State Hazard Mitigation Team and local governments to take advantage of this funding. The Department of Community Affairs’ Division of Disaster Recovery & Mitigation will partner with towns and homeowners to manage home elevation projects. The Department of Environmental Protection’s Blue Acres Program will manage home buyout activities with this funding.

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