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## Governor Christie Signs Executive Order To Advance Demolition Efforts Of Unsafe Sandy-Impacted Structures

Friday, February 28, 2014

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***Directs Department of Community Affairs Commissioner To Oversee the State's Efforts To Demolish Storm-Affected Structures That Jeopardize Fire, Health and Community Safety***

**Trenton, NJ**—Governor Chris Christie today signed Executive Order No. 152 taking necessary action to demolish unsafe, Sandy-impacted structures to make New Jersey's storm-affected communities safer from fire and health hazards and physical dangers. The Governor's action will help local municipalities raze unsound, unsafe and uninhabitable Sandy-damaged homes and buildings that pose significant risks to communities and undermine recovery efforts.

The Executive Order, which takes effect immediately, designates the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner to oversee efforts to demolish storm-damaged structures located in the nine counties most impacted by Superstorm Sandy as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

"Property owners and local officials in Sandy-impacted areas have made significant strides in removing unsafe and dilapidated homes and buildings left behind by the storm. Despite municipalities' best efforts to demolish these damaged structures, many structures have yet to be removed, posing safety and health hazards for communities and impeding recovery efforts in affected areas," said Governor Christie. "Therefore, I am directing the Department of Community Affairs to step in and take appropriate action to accelerate the demolition process so that we can advance recovery efforts in our communities."

In order to accomplish the tasks detailed in the Executive Order, the DCA has created the Unsafe Structure Demolition Program, utilizing \$15 million in federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery funding from HUD. The funding will be used to identify and demolish unsafe structures, to remove debris, and to perform any additional activities related to demolitions.

DCA code enforcement officials have been dispatched to communities impacted by the storm to identify private properties containing Sandy-damaged structures that pose a public hazard and need to be demolished. When such structures are identified, a notice will be served on the property owner. Property owners can accept or reject the enforcement official's determination. Property owners who challenge an unsafe structure determination will have the right to apply to the DCA for a hearing and, ultimately, the right to challenge the state's determination in state court.

A copy of the Governor's Executive Order No. 152 [pdf 25kB]

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