

Governor Chris Christie Announces Federal Disaster Aid Approved For Seventeen New Jersey Counties Impacted By Winter Storm Jonas

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Major Disaster Declaration Supported by State's Preliminary Damage Assessment of \$82.6 Million

Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie today announced that President Obama has granted the State's request for a major disaster declaration for Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Somerset, Union, and Warren Counties due to the severe winter storm event that included heavy snow, high winds, and flooding during the period of January 22-24, 2016. Winter Storm Jonas brought blizzard conditions and record snowfall of up to 30 inches of snow to New Jersey. Dangerous high winds combined with dense snowfall caused hazardous travel conditions, fallen trees, and approximately 270,000 power outages in affected counties. A near-full moon on January 22 created high tides across the State, including record high tidal cycles from Friday evening into Saturday morning in at least two locations. These high tides, along with strong offshore winds of 60 miles per hour, contributed to a storm surge that caused coastal flooding in areas of southern New Jersey.

The declaration authorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to initiate its Public Assistance grant program to assist the impacted areas. FEMA's Public Assistance program provides grants to state and local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations for emergency work and the repair or replacement of eligible public facilities damaged by the disaster. In addition, emergency "snow assistance" will be provided for a period for Bergen, Burlington, Camden, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Somerset, Union, and Warren Counties. FEMA's snow assistance program is activated as a result of a record snow fall event, and provides reimbursement for eligible snow-related expenses for a period of 48 hours.

The disaster declaration also authorizes activation of FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

After an extensive damage assessment, which surveyed more than \$82.6 million of damage resulting from the severe winter storm event, Governor Christie formally requested a Major Disaster Declaration under the federal Stafford Act on February 11, 2016.

The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management will continue to coordinate the recovery effort with local, county and federal partners in these affected counties.

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