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## Christie Administration Enables Toms River To Maintain Critical Public Services Through Disaster Recovery Essential Services Grants

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Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

### ***\$28 Million in Essential Services Grants Allows Township To Prevent Layoffs And Continue Providing Police, Public Works And Emergency Services***

**Trenton, NJ** – Continuing his commitment to helping communities hardest hit by Superstorm Sandy, Governor Chris Christie today toured Toms River to see how \$28 million in Essential Services Grants are helping the municipality recover from the storm and avoid layoffs. Funded through the New Jersey Disaster Recovery Action Plan approved by the Obama Administration in May, the Essential Services Grants are used to fund police, public works, education and emergency first aid squads. A \$15,510,417 Essential Services Grant is helping Toms River Township prevent layoffs, maintain its residential trash and recycling pick-up and continue its financial support of volunteer emergency first aid squads, while continuing to provide critical police, public works, education and emergency first aid services. Additionally, a \$12,500,000 Essential Services Grant is assisting the Toms River Board of Education in providing education services to students in the school district.

“The needs of New Jersey’s hardest hit municipalities can place a heavy burden on city budgets and local officials. As many communities now face difficult budget decisions, we are confident that the Essential Services Grant program will help keep essential services running while the recovery process continues,” said Governor Christie. “These grants will ensure that Toms River residents continue to have access to local public works, emergency and education services that are so vital to their own recovery.”

The \$15.5 million Essential Services Grant helped avoid the layoff of approximately 25 percent of the Toms River Township police force and the entire public works force assigned to residential trash and recycling pick up. The grant also helped to avoid cut backs to the volunteer first aid squads, as well as reductions in reimbursements to private homeowners associations for essential services that assist a large senior citizen population. The funding will also allow the Township to maintain its building code officials and engineering personnel who are helping residents in their rehabilitation and rebuilding efforts.

Separately, the \$12.5 million Essential Services Grant awarded to the Toms River Board of Education (BOE) will enable the school district to continue providing essential education services to students while limiting the property tax increase to 2 percent on average for taxpayers.

“The demand for essential services in Toms River has actually increased based on the need of the police department and the public works department to continue Sandy-related safety and cleanup efforts on the barrier island and along the mainland waterfront,” said Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Richard E. Constable, III. “We are pleased that more than \$28 million in Essential Services funding is aiding the community’s recovery efforts and helping residents return to some semblance of normalcy.”

Last month, the Christie Administration announced the award of more than \$44.5 million in Essential Services Grants to 11 Sandy-impacted local governmental entities in New Jersey that lost significant revenue and are experiencing budget distress. In addition to Toms River and the Toms River BOE, grant recipients include Asbury Park, Atlantic City, Brigantine BOE, Keansburg BOE, Lavallette BOE, Little Egg Harbor BOE, Ocean County, Pinelands Regional BOE, and Sea Bright Borough. Today’s tour of Toms River follows Commissioner Constable’s visit last week to Sea Bright

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[Essential Services Grant Program](#)

Borough to see how that community is using its Essential Service Grant to help recover from Superstorm Sandy.

The Essential Services Grants are funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery monies provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These grants are one of the programs included in the New Jersey Disaster Recovery Action Plan, which was approved by HUD on April 29, 2013. The Action Plan details how the State will utilize \$1,829,520,000 in CDBG Disaster Recovery funding to help individuals, businesses and communities impacted by Superstorm Sandy. The Essential Services Grant program will utilize \$60 million of the allocation.

The grants are designed to fill the gap between local governments' Sandy-generated revenue losses and available FEMA Community Disaster Loans.

To receive grant assistance, local governments must meet a minimum of the following requirements:

Applying for insurance payments and all available federal assistance programs, including FEMA Public Assistance, FEMA Community Disaster Loan Program, and appropriately utilizing all such assistance to the extent available;

Demonstrating cost restraints to minimize the need for assistance;

Agreeing to allocate Essential Service Grant funds, if provided, only to essential services such as public safety and public works in accordance with CDBG Disaster Recovery requirements;

Ensuring updated emergency management plans; and

Demonstrating a commitment to rebuilding public property; facilitating the reconstruction of ratables in a manner designed to minimize recurring damage; and pursuing efficiencies through shared services or consolidation as deemed appropriate by local officials to address changed populations or service models.

For more information on Essential Services Grants, log on to <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/dlgs/lfns/13/2013-15.pdf>.

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