

Governor Phil Murphy

During Visit to I-80 Sinkhole Site, Governor Murphy Requests Federal Funding to Repair Damages

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Governor Declares State of Emergency in Morris County to Enable Access to Federal Funding

New Jersey Department of Transportation Crews Have Been Performing Around-The-Clock Emergency Repairs and Stabilization Work to Address Hazards

WHARTON – During a visit to the Interstate 80 (I-80) sinkhole site in Morris County, Governor Phil Murphy today announced that his Administration has requested emergency relief federal funding to repair damages to the highway and affected area. The Governor was joined by Superintendent of the State Police Pat Callahan, New Jersey Department of Transportation Commissioner Fran O'Connor, legislators, and local elected officials for a tour of the affected area, which was damaged due to a collapsed mine under the highway's eastbound shoulder near Exit 34.

New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) crews have been performing around-the-clock emergency repairs and stabilization work to address the hazards. To expedite repair, the Governor declared a State of Emergency in Morris County, allowing the State to apply for federal funding which may be provided by the Federal Highway Administration if a road has suffered serious damage due to a natural disaster or another external cause.

"For several weeks now, the residents of Wharton and commuters all across New Jersey, have endured major delays and disruptions as a result of the sinkholes that have opened up here on I-80," **said Governor Murphy**. "By declaring a State of Emergency in Morris County, we can take the first step toward accessing federal funding to help us to repair this damage. While there is no immediate danger to the public, we will continue to do everything we can to help New Jersey commuters and families can get their lives back on track."

"I want to thank Governor Murphy, the New Jersey State Police and local officials for their support and cooperation as we continue repair operations so we can safely reopen the highway," **NJDOT Commissioner Fran O'Connor said**. "Safety is our primary concern – for the crews working around the clock, for the motorists that have been impacted, and for the residents and businesses in the neighboring communities. As the proactive drilling and grouting continues, we are narrowing in on the area that will require a more extensive repair."

"The closure of Interstate 80 has created significant challenges for motorists, local residents, and first responders alike, but the public's safety remains our top priority," **said Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. "We recognize the tireless efforts of the New Jersey Department of Transportation and their dedicated crews as they work around the clock to make the necessary repairs and reopen this critical roadway as soon as possible. We thank Governor Phil Murphy's leadership and commitment to securing the resources needed to expedite this project. The New Jersey State Police will continue to support our state and local partners to ensure the safety and efficiency of travel throughout the region."

"I saw firsthand this morning the huge impact this highway closure is having on Morris County towns along I-80," **said Congressman Tom Kean, Jr.** "This is a serious issue that we have to work together at all levels of government to fix and safety of our residents is our shared priority here. I will be advocating daily for all federal resources necessary to get I-80 restored to full capacity. As reconstruction efforts continue, I am also going to work with state and local officials to come up with transportation alternatives in the mean time. I think NJ Transit should offer residents in these towns some temporary incentives to use transit as an alternative for travel both east and westbound. I will be looking more into that this week. We need to help these communities get through this."

"The Governor's visit to the site today, along with the announcement of his request for federal relief funding, is welcome news to the residents, businesses, and commuters in this area. The Governor's request is an important step toward ensuring the NJDOT and the State Police have the resources necessary to make the critical repairs and restore normal traffic flow as quickly and safely as possible," **said Senate Republican Leader Anthony M. Bucco**. "I commend the Governor, NJDOT Commissioner Connor, State Police Superintendent Callahan, and their staffs for their swift response and coordination with local officials to keep drivers safe and minimize disruptions for residents and businesses in the area."

"This problem on I-80 has encumbered the lives of many, many people both locally here in Morris County and Interstate travelers," **said Assemblyman Christian Barranco**. "I support the Governor's decision to seek federal funding to expedite the crucial process of minimizing the impact these sinkholes have caused, and I commend DOT's Fran O'Connor for his daily diligence in making sure manpower is engaged 24 hours a day."

"I have been working closely with NJDOT and local officials to push for swift and effective repairs to this critical roadway for our state," **said Assemblywoman Aura Dunn**. "I appreciate Governor Murphy's efforts to secure emergency federal funding, as transportation is a necessity, not a luxury. Emergency funding for the sinkhole is essential to ensure public safety, repair vital infrastructure, and prevent further damage to our community."

"On behalf of the Mayor and council, we would like to express our gratitude to those who are working on the structural repairs on Rt 80," **said Wharton Mayor William Chegwidan and Council President Robert Norton in a joint statement**. "We know it's a monumental task that will take time and resources to ensure integrity and safety to all our citizens."

"Roxbury welcomes with the Governor's decision to sign the executive order declaring a State of Emergency," **said Roxbury Township Mayor Shawn Potillo**. "We also appreciate the support of the New Jersey State Police who have been assisting our local Roxbury police with managing traffic flow. The New Jersey Economic Development Authority will be providing a presentation in Roxbury and discussing ways the state can provide financial assistance to local businesses impacted by this situation. We thank Senate Minority Leader Tony Bucco and our local representatives for their leadership during this challenging time, that communities are facing."

"I want to thank Governor Murphy for coming out to the site on Route 80 today," **said Mine Hill Mayor Sam Morris**. "I also want to thank him for the Declaration of a state of emergency which makes this site eligible for federal funds. I think it's appropriate to ask the federal department of transportation to get involved in trying to solve this problem. This is a serious and potentially deadly issue and needs a permanent, well-funded repair. The Governor's actions today foster an effective path forward."

"First and foremost, I want to commend the Department of Transportation and everyone working on this critical site," **said Mount Arlington Mayor Michael Stanzilis**. "They've been working tirelessly around the clock, in every kind of weather, to address this issue. I also want to express my gratitude to Governor Murphy for declaring a state of emergency—it's a vital step toward finding a solution. The residents of Mount Arlington have shown tremendous patience in dealing with the additional traffic and, for many, extended commute times. However, I know this situation has become incredibly frustrating for them. We need a solution, and we need it as quickly as possible."

"We appreciate Governor Murphy coming to Morris County to meet with local elected and NJ DOT officials to see and hear firsthand the progress of the repairs on Route 80 eastbound," **said Jefferson Township Mayor Eric Wilsusen**. "It is also an opportunity for Governor Murphy to hear directly from local officials all the impacts this closure is having on our communities. We all hope that a solution is near and the interstate can be opened to full traffic soon."

For a copy of Executive Order No. 383, click [here](#)

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