

## Christie Administration Announces First Post-Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Buyouts In Woodbridge

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Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)



**Trenton, NJ** – The first closing on the buyouts of flood-threatened homes in Woodbridge, where the Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Program has approved nearly 200 homes for purchase, was announced today by Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin.

In total, 306 families in six towns now have accepted DEP Blue Acres' buyout offers, and there have been 154 closings in three Middlesex County municipalities, Woodbridge, Sayreville and South River, as part of the Christie Administration's goal of buying 1,300 homes statewide to move residents out of harm's way and create natural buffer areas to handle future storm waters.

"The Blue Acres buyout program is Governor Christie's pledge to help residents in storm-damaged communities relocate and start their lives again outside of flood-prone areas," said Commissioner Martin. "We also are creating new, permanent open space that can serve as flood plains to buffer communities from future storms."

The first closing in Woodbridge was for a Crampton Avenue home that was purchased for \$228,000. Like other homes acquired as part of the Blue Acres program, it was purchased at pre-Sandy market value based on an independent appraisal.

"We're pleased that the closings are starting to happen, and we're very satisfied with the state's handling of Woodbridge's cases," said Woodbridge Mayor John McCormac. "The state has done a tremendous job."

Blue Acres' has targeted homes of willing sellers in the Sewaren, Port Reading, and Avenel sections of the municipality.

DEP also has made offers to homeowners in East Brunswick and Newark, and will begin making offers in Lawrence Township in the fall. The department is currently pursuing buyouts in Linden, Old Bridge, Manville, and several other municipalities.

The DEP has identified 946 properties for buyouts in 10 municipalities that sustained major flooding from Sandy's storm surge or previous storms. So far, 151 homes have been purchased, and 48 homes have been demolished.

Launched by the Christie Administration in May, 2013, the state's \$300 million buyout program will purchase some 1,300 damaged homes at pre-Sandy market values to provide residents with financial resources needed to relocate to residences in less flood-prone areas.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program has approved nearly \$160 million, which is administered by the state Office of Emergency Management, toward the purchase of homes in Sayreville, Woodbridge, and South River. State Blue Acres dollars and federal U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resource Conservation Service funding also will be used to buy homes in Newark, East Brunswick and Lawrence Township.

Additional federal funding to acquire other properties impacted by Superstorm Sandy will be provided through the \$1.46 billion second round of federal Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds allocated to New Jersey by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

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The DEP has created a special post-Sandy Blue Acres team to work closely with willing sellers and process their buyout applications as quickly as possible. Case managers are working with individual homeowners personally to help guide them through the process.

The initial Blue Acres Program began in 1995, and the DEP purchased lands in floodways in the Delaware, Passaic and Raritan river basins. The program was later expanded to include all state waters. Eligible properties must be storm damaged, prone to incurring storm damage or situated on land that could provide a buffer to protect other areas from such damage.

Homeowners interested in selling their homes through this process may contact the DEP's Blue Acres Program at 609-984-0500.

For more information on the Blue Acres Program, visit: [http://www.state.nj.us/dep/greenacres/blue\\_flood\\_ac.html](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/greenacres/blue_flood_ac.html)

For information on Sandy Recovery, visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/special/hurricane-sandy/>

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