

Christie Administration Announces \$13.8 Million For Buyouts Of 67 Residential Properties In Sayreville

Tuesday, September 10, 2013 Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)



FEMA Commitment Now Stands At \$55.1 Million For 272 Buyouts

Trenton, NJ – The Christie Administration today announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has awarded the state \$13.8 million in Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding for the voluntary acquisition of 67 homes in Sayreville as part of the Administration’s plan to buy out homes impacted by Superstorm Sandy and preserve the land as buffers against future flooding.

With this third round of funding, FEMA has now awarded the state nearly \$55.1 million for the purchases of 272 homes in Sayreville and South River. These communities sustained extensive flooding from the Raritan and South rivers during Sandy.

“I commend FEMA for its continued support as we work toward our goal of moving willing sellers in flood-prone areas,” said Governor Christie. “We will continue to work closely with our federal partners to help these residents move forward with their lives as quickly as possible. My Administration understands that this decision is a deeply personal one, and is committed to making this process as easy as possible for every property owner participating in the program.”

“This program is an important part of the Administration’s multifaceted effort to make the state stronger and more resilient,” said Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin. “The buyout program will move thousands of families out of harm’s way and turn these properties into open space that will absorb future flood waters, helping to protect at-risk communities.”

To date, the DEP has made offers to more than 50 property owners in the first round of 129 targeted acquisitions in Sayreville. Nine of these have accepted offers. The first closings are expected soon. Additional offers are expected soon for both Sayreville and South River, and appraisals are ongoing.

The buyout program is targeting 1,000 properties in tidal areas affected by Sandy and another 300 properties in the Passaic River Basin that have repeatedly flooded. The Christie Administration has targeted Sayreville and South River in Middlesex County for the first phase of acquisitions under the \$300 million buyout program and is continuing to hold meetings in other storm-affected municipalities to explain the program.

FEMA has previously awarded nearly \$29.5 million for the purchase of 129 Sayreville homes followed by a second round totaling \$11.9 million for the acquisition of 76 properties in South River.

The 67 Sayreville properties FEMA approved for acquisition in the third round of funding are located primarily in the Old Bridge section of Sayreville on Charles, John, and William streets, as well as David Street, Bordentown Avenue, Fisher Street, Mac Arthur Avenue, Weber Avenue, Brookside Avenue, Boehmhurst Avenue, Miller Avenue and Washington Road.

Once acquisitions are completed, the homes will be razed and the land will be maintained as open space that can handle future flood waters.

This buyout program is a joint effort of the DEP, State Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) and FEMA. DEP administers all Blue Acres purchases and NJOEM handles financing through FEMA.

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FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program provides 75 percent of the funding. The DEP Blue Acres Program, which is an extension of the DEP Green Acres Program, provides the remaining 25 percent. Additional federal funding for the match is expected to be provided from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

An independent licensed appraiser hired by the state conducts property appraisals. The appraisals are based on the value of the property before Sandy. These appraisals are the basis for the amount offered for each property. The DEP has created a special team to work closely with sellers and process their applications as quickly as possible. Case managers are reaching out to individual homeowners personally and help guide them through the process.

Launched in 1995, the initial Blue Acres Program targeted purchases of lands in floodways in the Delaware, Passaic and Raritan river basins, but was later expanded to include all state waters. Eligible properties are those that have been storm damaged, that are prone to incurring storm damage, or that may buffer or protect other lands 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

For information on Sandy Recovery, visit:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/special/hurricane-sandy/>

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Transcript Flashback:

Paymon Rouhanifard: We know our kids here in Camden are capable of greatness and we simply cannot allow these trends to continue to take hold of our children. I know firsthand it's not only possible to decrease the achievement gap, but we can even reverse it. As we all know, the importance of attaining an excellent education has profound life implications. Those without a high school diploma are 72% more likely to be unemployed. Those with a college degree earn two and half times those who drop out of high school. We can put our students on a pathway to college and career readiness and we can put Camden on track to be the thriving city we know it is. I believe in my bones that the American Dream can live strongly here in Camden. And one reason I believe that is because I've lived that dream.

Governor Christie: I want to thank Paymon again for his willingness to step forward and take on this challenge. It is a significant one. But I think you can tell from his personal story that this is someone who understands challenge. And I think you can tell from the eloquence of his remarks that his parents' commitment to him and his brother for a better education paid off. And he stands here today as a successful example of what can happen for someone who at one point in his life was homeless, penniless and didn't speak English. And today he stands up here as a leader of a school district who has articulated a vision for the future that is uplifting for all of us. There are children in the Camden school system today, I am confident, who face some of those very same challenges. And our job is to make sure that not just one of them, but multiples of them, stand on a stage like this someday in their future like the new Superintendent has and impress an audience like you in the same way that he has impressed this audience today and will impress you even further with his work and his commitment to the people of this city.

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