



SECURE & PREPARED

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Special points of interest:

- Severe Weather Awareness Week is April 2-6. See page 3 for details.
- Information on the Fourth Annual Governor's Homeland Security Conference is now available at www.iowahomelandsecurity.org See page 4.

Save the dates July 16-18 for this year's Fourth Annual Governor's Homeland Security Conference!

Visit iowahomelandsecurity.org for more information.

Iowa Waits for Presidential Disaster Declaration

On March 1, Governor Chet Culver sent a request to President Bush for a Presidential Disaster Declaration following back-to-back winter storms that started on February 24 and wreaked havoc on central and eastern Iowa power lines. Ice, snow, and wind proved to be too much for power lines, causing electrical poles to snap in half like twigs. As many as 420,000 homes and businesses were without power.

A Presidential Disaster Declaration would provide Public Assistance, Debris Removal and Hazard Mitigation programs statewide for the following 46 counties: Benton, Black Hawk, Boone, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Calhoun, Cedar, Chickasaw, Clinton, Des Moines, Fayette, Floyd, Franklin, Greene, Grundy, Hamilton, Hardin, Henry, Howard, Humboldt, Iowa Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Keokuk, Lee, Linn, Louisa, Marion, Marshall, Mitchell, Muscatine, Pocahontas, Poweshiek, Story, Tama, Van Buren, Wapello, Washington, Winnebago, Winneshiek, Worth and Wright Counties.

The Public Assistance program will aid in the rebuilding of public infrastructure damaged by the storms, while the Hazard Mitigation program is designed to fund programs that help prevent damages from future storms. Damage assessment for potential eligible expenses totaled \$34,763,663. Of this figure, estimated damage attributed to Rural Electrical Cooperatives (REC's) totaled \$31,854,715.

Continued on page 2.



Above, semis try to get past downed power lines on Highway 14 near Conrad during the first storm. *Photo courtesy of Brian Krumm, Marshalltown.* Right, Governor Culver receives an update on operations in hard-hit Tama County from



Emergency Management Coordinator Roxane Warnell and Maj. Lucas of the National Guard. The Guard made door-to-door visits to check on area residents. *Photo courtesy of the Iowa National Guard.*

Iowa Waits for Presidential Disaster Declaration

Continued from page 1

"It is important to remember these damage estimates only cover eligible expenses under the federal programs," Governor Culver stressed. "The actual damages that can be attributed to this storm are substantially higher."

The federal Public Assistance program is designed to help government and certain non-profit organizations rebuild after the storms. RECs are eligible and will be the main users of the program. Uninsured personal property losses were not high enough to request a federal declaration for Individual Assistance which is designed to directly help affected residents.

Iowa Individual Assistance Program

Under the leadership of Governor Culver, the Iowa Legislature quickly passed an emergency appropriation of \$1 million designed to help the most needy Iowans rebound from the storm. Under this first of its kind program, low-income Iowans can be reimbursed to cover certain costs associated with rebuilding after the storm.

Here are examples of reimbursable expenses:

- Up to \$1,000 will be available to reimburse storm-caused expenses for making the dwelling safe, sanitary, and secure.
- Up to \$300 for an electrician to help bring power back to a dwelling.
- Up to \$560 will be available for storm-related damage to appliances or food.
- Up to \$425 for purchase and installation of a water heater.
- Up to \$500 for damage to a vehicle.
- Up to \$50 a day for lodging or rental expenses in case the storm forced residents to leave their homes.

Applications may be completed by households whose annual income is 130 percent or less of federal poverty guidelines, which is \$13,273 for a single individual, \$17,797 for a family of two and \$26,845 for a family of four. An application form with instructions is available at www.iowahomelandsecurity.org and at www.dhs.state.ia.us. The Iowa Department of Human Services has set up a toll-free hotline (866-434-4692) for those with questions.

Applicants must provide receipts for qualifying uninsured expenses. Generators are not covered by the program. Applicants must also indicate that their household income meets the income eligibility test. Income includes wages, child support, retirement income, and Social Security benefits. Completed applications should be taken to county emergency management coordinators. A list of county emergency management offices is available on the above mentioned Web sites.



Above, the state's emergency operation center was activated. At left, HSEMD Administrator David Miller participates in a press conference with Department of Defense Director Maj. General Ron Dardis, Lt. Governor Patty Judge and Governor Chet Culver.

What We Are All About

By HSEMD Administrator, David L. Miller



It's been a while, maybe too long, since we've activated our EOC and worked at the level required during the recent one-two punch of an ice storm followed by a blizzard. It was an important reminder of our primary job – protecting Iowans.

Let me start by recognizing the extraordinary work of the utility crews that brought power back to our state. The estimates now are that at one point or another about 420,000 Iowa electrical users were without power. To rebuild lines and bring all those customers back in just over a week is remarkable.

I'd also like to thank local emergency managers and responders for their tireless efforts to coordinate activities in their counties. Once again you rose to the occasion.

Many of you know that Governor Chet Culver and Lt. Governor Patty Judge were actively involved in this response effort. Their presence and interest spurred the involvement of department directors and the senior management of state government.

Governor Culver was deeply worried about each Iowan and his concerns highlight the post-Katrina world we now live in. No longer can we wait for demands from the public. Now we are expected to anticipate and react ahead of their requests. It puts more pressure on us to get ahead of the needs of the people we serve.

The bottom line can be judged in the lives we saved. While we grieve with the families of those whose deaths can be attributed to this storm, we certainly are thankful the number was not higher. That's a testament to the efforts of all that helped on both the public and private side.

Severe Weather Awareness Week Coming April 2-6



Iowa Governor Chet Culver, the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division and the National Weather Service have designated April 2-6, 2007 as Severe Weather Awareness Week in Iowa. A tornado drill will be held from 10-10:30 on April 4. In case of bad weather, the drill will be moved to April 5.

Topics for the week include:
Mon: NOAA Weather Radios
Tue: Severe Thunderstorms
Wed: Tornadoes (Tornado Drill)
Thurs: Family Preparedness
Fri: Flooding

HSEMD will run public service announcements on radio stations statewide during Severe Weather Awareness Week to promote preparedness information on www.BeReadyIowa.org and to promote a drawing for 30 NOAA weather radios featured on this Web site.

County coordinators: More information is available for your use including posters and press releases at http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/asp/resource_room/info_library.asp.

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HSEMD Mission

Lead, coordinate, and support homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

We're on the Web!

www.iowahomelandsecurity.org

Homeland Security Conference Update

The Fourth Annual Governor's Homeland Security Conference will be held July 16-18 at the Polk County Convention Complex in Des Moines.



TEAMING FOR SUCCESS

Hear from well-known speakers, meet new people, see the latest technology.

For more information, visit www.iowahomelandsecurity.org and click on the conference link at the top of our home page. Registration information will be coming soon, so please check our Web site in a few weeks. For questions: e-mail: governor-conf@iowa.gov or call Mary Ann Lee at 515-243-2000.

Personnel Notes

Susan Dixon has joined HSEMD as a Program Planner II for the Preparedness Bureau. She will be working with Region III, on capitol complex emergency planning, and on mitigation projects.



Susan brings various environmental program experiences to the Division from 13 years with the Iowa DNR Environmental Protection Division. Six of those years were in the emergency response unit working spills from all over the state including the floods of 1993 and the Terra Chemical Explosion in Sergeant Bluff.

Best wishes to **Beckie Barker**. She has been with HSEMD since 2003 and has accepted a Budget Analyst position in the Military Division of Public Defense. Her last day with HSEMD was March 8th.

Need a Speaker for Your Next Meeting?

If you are part of an organization that brings in speakers, HSEMD would like to speak to your group about the steps that have been taken since the 9-11 attacks and the role the public plays in preparing for all types of disasters. Whether it's civic groups or church organizations, we'll be happy to come and tell our story anywhere in the state.

To find out more, or to make a request, contact Lucinda Robertson at 515-725-3239 or e-mail at Lucinda.Robertson@iowa.gov.