

Massachusetts Severe Winter Storm and Flooding – FEMA-1813-DR

Declared January 5, 2009

On December 23, 2008, Governor Deval L. Patrick requested a major disaster declaration due to the ice storm event beginning on December 11, 2008, and continuing. The Governor requested a declaration for Public Assistance for five counties and Hazard Mitigation for the entire Commonwealth. The Governor further requested direct Federal assistance.

On December 18, 2008, joint Federal, Commonwealth, and local Public Assistance Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs) were conducted in the requested counties and are summarized below. PDAs estimate damages immediately after an event and are considered, along with several other factors, in determining whether a disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the Commonwealth and the affected local governments, and that Federal assistance is necessary.¹

On January 5, 2009, President Bush declared that a major disaster exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This declaration made Public Assistance requested by the Governor available to the Commonwealth and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe winter storm and flooding in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester Counties. Direct Federal assistance also was authorized. Finally, this declaration also made Hazard Mitigation Grant Program assistance requested by the Governor available for hazard mitigation measures for the entire Commonwealth.

Summary of Damage Assessment Information Used in Determining Whether to Declare a Major Disaster

Individual Assistance - (*Not requested*)

- Total Number of Residences Impacted:² -
 - Destroyed - -
 - Major Damage - -
 - Minor Damage - -
 - Affected - -

- Percentage of insured residences:³ -
- Percentage of low income households:⁴ -
- Percentage of elderly households:⁵ -
- Total Individual Assistance cost estimate: -

Public Assistance

- Primary Impact: Costs associated with debris removal
- Total Public Assistance cost estimate: \$30,671,617
- Statewide per capita impact:⁶ \$4.83
- Statewide per capita impact indicator:⁷ \$1.31
- Countywide per capita impact:
 - Berkshire County (\$7.07)
 - Franklin County (\$9.80)
 - Hampden County (\$4.06)
 - Hampshire County (\$3.65)
 - Worcester County (\$35.43)
- Countywide per capita impact indicator:⁸ \$3.28

¹ The preliminary damage assessment (PDA) process is a mechanism used to determine the impact and magnitude of damage and resulting needs of individuals, businesses, public sector, and community as a whole. Information collected is used by the State as a basis for the Governor's request for a major disaster or emergency declaration, and by the President in determining a response to the Governor's request (44 CFR § 206.33).

² Degree of damage to impacted residences:

- Destroyed – total loss of structure, structure is not economically feasible to repair, or complete failure to major structural components (e.g., collapse of basement walls/foundation, walls or roof);
- Major Damage – substantial failure to structural elements of residence (e.g., walls, floors, foundation), or damage that will take more than 30 days to repair;
- Minor Damage – home is damaged and uninhabitable, but may be made habitable in short period of time with repairs; and
- Affected – some damage to the structure and contents, but still habitable.

³ By law, Federal disaster assistance cannot duplicate insurance coverage (44 CFR § 206.48(b)(5)).

⁴ Special populations, such as low-income, the elderly, or the unemployed may indicate a greater need for assistance (44 CFR § 206.48(b)(3)).

⁵ Ibid (44 CFR § 206.48(b)(3)).

⁶ Based on State population in the 2000 Census.

⁷ Statewide Per Capita Impact Indicator for FY09, *Federal Register*, October 1, 2008.

⁸ Countywide Per Capita Impact Indicator for FY09, *Federal Register*, October 1, 2008.