



Office of the Governor
CONTACT: Stacey Johnson
Phone: (804) 225-4260
E-mail: Stacey.Johnson@Governor.Virginia.Gov

Virginia Department of Emergency Management
CONTACT: Bob Spieldenner
Phone: (804) 897-6510
E-mail: Bob.Spieldenner@vdem.virginia.gov

Governor McDonnell Announces Federal Disaster Assistance for State and Local Governments

*FEMA Assistance Granted for December Storm; February
Storm Costs Still Being Tallied for Possible Relief Assistance
Reimbursement Expected in Coming Months*

RICHMOND - Governor Bob McDonnell announced today that President Barack Obama has granted a request for federal assistance to state and local governments in Virginia for recovery from the Severe Winter Storm that occurred Dec. 18-20, 2009.

The declaration makes FEMA's Public Assistance Program available to cover eligible government and certain nonprofit costs for snow removal, damage to critical infrastructure, debris removal and related emergency services. Eligible localities are the cities of Alexandria, Charlottesville, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, Staunton and Waynesboro and the counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amherst, Arlington, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Caroline, Fairfax, Grayson, Greene, Hanover, Highland, Louisa, Madison, Montgomery, Nelson, Orange, Page, Prince William, Rockbridge, Spotsylvania and Stafford.

In addition, several localities were approved for damage to critical infrastructure, debris removal and related emergency services, but not snow removal. Those localities include the counties of Buchanan, Culpeper, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott and Wise and the city of Norton.

FEMA indicated that additional localities may be added at a later date after further evaluation. Federal disaster assistance funds are awarded through a reimbursement process that can take months, and in some cases, years.

In addition to the Public Assistance Program, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds were approved for the entire Commonwealth. The Hazard Mitigation program provides funds for government projects that help reduce disaster risks by protecting homes and businesses against future damage.

Virginia did not receive federal assistance for individuals or businesses. The commonwealth did not ask for that type of assistance since there was a high rate of insured property in the affected area.

Local governments and state agencies are currently calculating their damage and snow removal costs for the two winter storms that struck the Commonwealth between February 5th and February 11th. The federal government has agreed to allow states to consider the two storms as one event for purposes of a disaster declaration application. Those figures will be submitted to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to determine if the Commonwealth will be able to seek federal assistance for that storm. The process could take several weeks.

#