



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
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CHRIS CHRISTIE  
GOVERNOR

July 13, 2015

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Mr. Jerome Hatfield  
Region II Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Department of Homeland Security  
26 Federal Plaza  
New York, NY 10278-0002

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), as implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a Major Disaster for the State of New Jersey applicable to the counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester as a result of the damages caused by severe thunderstorms and straight-line winds on June 23, 2015.

These thunderstorms and straight-line winds struck the State in the afternoon on Tuesday, June 23, 2015, with high winds and heavy rain producing debris and wide-spread power outages caused by falling trees, and downed power-poles and electric wires. The National Weather Service (NWS) characterized the storms as a "macroburst." NWS further reported that the storms contained straight-line winds with gusts up to 85 miles-per-hour. These storms directly resulted in damage to businesses and thousands of residential homes. As a result, dozens of individuals were evacuated and required sheltering.

The storms left hundreds of thousands of customers without electricity. Utility companies reported 330,100 without power: 280,000 customers from Atlantic City Electric and 50,100 serviced by Public Service Electric & Gas. Many of these power outages were localized, with a 100% loss in electricity in seven municipalities within Gloucester County: East Greenwich, Greenwich, Logan, Pitman, Swedesboro, Wenonah, and Woolwich. Further, these

power outages affected critical infrastructure, hospitals, and long-term care facilities. Power outages affecting critical infrastructure included four radio communications towers in Burlington County, water treatment facilities, Ancora Psychiatric Hospital, and numerous municipal public works agencies. Hospitals, including Virtua Voorhees and Kennedy Stratford in Camden County, instituted full patient diversions due to high volume. Long-term care facilities, including Hammonton Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare in Atlantic County, Brandywine Senior Living and Mount Laurel Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare in Burlington County, and Pitman Manor in Gloucester County were all forced to emergency power generation, and Brookdale Evesham in Camden County was completely without power.

Summer temperatures compounded the effects of this incident, requiring cooling centers to be opened in Gloucester County along with water and ice distribution in Burlington and Gloucester counties assisted by the American Red Cross (ARC). In addition, downed trees and other debris from the storms caused road closures and detours, disrupting traffic in many municipalities including Hammonton in Atlantic County, Cherry Hill in Camden County, and Greenwich Township, Glassboro, and Harrison Township in Gloucester County. Many State highways within those municipalities were shut down, including NJ 54, 154, 44, 45, and 47. Exit ramps were also closed on Interstate Highway 295 in Gloucester County due to debris.

The State Emergency Operations Center was activated on June 24, 2015 to monitor and coordinate resource requests and response and recovery efforts and the State Emergency Operations Plan was executed. State Emergency Support Functions (ESF) 1 (Transportation), 3 (Public Works and Engineering), 5 (Emergency Management), 6 (Mass Care), 7 (Resource Support), and 12 (Energy) were involved in the response effort to assist affected municipalities and counties. In addition, Gloucester County declared a state of emergency, activated its emergency response plan and stood up its emergency operations center as well as a medical needs shelter. Camden County also activated its emergency operations center.

State assets deployed included New Jersey State Police Aviation crews for flyover damage assessments, chainsaw crews from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) damage survey personnel. ESF 1, through the New Jersey Department of Transportation, organized crews to repair damaged roads and bridges and traffic control devices, and ESF 6, through the New Jersey Department of Human Services, coordinated with the ARC on sheltering and cooling center needs. Also, DEP under ESF 3 provided assistance to clear county and municipal roads of debris and helped establish six Temporary Debris Management Areas in Gloucester County and two in Burlington County. ESF 12, through lead agency Board of Public Utilities, coordinated State information with power outages. Non-State entities also mobilized to assist with the response effort. The ARC supported reception centers and provided housing assistance for displaced residents in Gloucester County as well as distributed clean-up kits. The Salvation Army set up food canteens to assist individuals. From the private sector, the Verizon Mobile Disaster Team

provided assistance to restore cellular service in the affected area.

On July 3, 2015, the State requested assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to conduct a joint preliminary damage assessment (PDA) in Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties. In preparation for the joint PDA, the State completed an extensive review of the damage estimates through the NJOEM Public Assistance unit, which is comprised of 14 individuals who have extensive experience and training estimating damages within the FEMA Public Assistance program. The joint PDA occurred on July 8-9, 2015, and counties and municipalities were able to provide better data compared to immediate estimates by conducting the PDA process two weeks after the storm. The final PDA determined that Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester counties suffered significant damages as indicated by Enclosure B. The State's request does not count approximately \$2 million in damages included in PDA calculations because they have been attributed to insurance coverage.

Based on the above, I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected county and local governments, and that federal assistance is necessary to supplement the efforts and available resources of the State, county and local governments, and disaster relief organizations. I am specifically requesting Public Assistance for the counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester. I am also requesting Hazard Mitigation assistance state-wide. The State developed a Hazard Mitigation Plan that was approved by FEMA in August 2014. The estimates, types, and amounts of assistance needed under the Stafford Act are tabulated in Enclosure B.

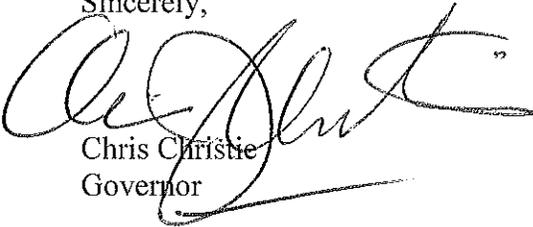
I certify that, for this disaster, the State and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act. Total expenditures are estimated to exceed the Statewide per capita threshold of \$1.81. The counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester exceeded their respective county thresholds as tabulated in Enclosure B. The total costs are estimated to exceed \$15,000,000.

In addition, pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173 regarding debris removal, the State agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster.

I have designated Captain Tristin Collins of the New Jersey State Police, Office of Emergency Management, as the Governor's Authorized Representative and State Coordinating Officer for this request. Captain Collins will work in conjunction with FEMA and will provide information or justification on my behalf when necessary.

These thunderstorms, which struck with little warning of their severity, have put a severe strain on State, county, and local resources and budgets. For the reasons detailed above, I respectfully request at this time a Major Disaster Declaration for the counties of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Christie", is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Christie  
Governor

Enclosures

FEMA Form 010-0-13  
B-Public Assistance PDA Summary Spreadsheet