

## **State of Iowa submits appeal to FEMA for denial of disaster aid**

DES MOINES – Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad today announced the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) submitted an appeal to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the reconsideration of an earlier FEMA decision to deny funding to four rural electric cooperatives (REC) in northwest Iowa in the aftermath of an ice storm that struck the state earlier this year.

The April 9, 2013, storm caused millions of dollars in damage to electrical utility lines in five Iowa counties: Dickinson, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola and Sioux. The damage was so extensive that a Presidential Disaster Declaration was issued on May 6, 2013.

FEMA originally denied funding to restore the downed utility lines in the amount of \$19 million on Aug. 30, 2013. The reason FEMA gave for the denial was because the utilities did not conduct "comprehensive laboratory testing."

"We hope FEMA will come to a fair and just decision regarding this REC appeal," said Governor Terry Branstad. "This funding is important for the recovery of Iowa communities. Denying such assistance could result in a financial burden for the customers of these cooperatives."

HSEMD filed the appeal in conjunction with Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, Lyon Rural Electric Cooperative, Osceola Electric Cooperative, and Sanborn Electric and Telecommunications Utility. FEMA has 90 days from the date they receive the appeal to make an evaluation and then, issue a determination.

The Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management leads, coordinates and supports homeland security and emergency management functions in order to establish sustainable communities and ensure economic opportunities for Iowa and its citizens.

###