

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: State Joint Information Center
515-725-3231 or HSEMDPIO@iowa.gov
Contact: Governor's Office
515-725-3518

President Obama Authorizes Third Disaster Declaration for Iowa since June

DES MOINES – Late yesterday, Gov. Branstad received notification that President Obama has authorized a Major Disaster Declaration for two counties impacted by severe storms and flooding July 27-29, 2011. The counties included in this declaration are Dubuque and Jackson.

The declaration by the President will provide federal funding to the declared counties under the Public Assistance Program. A Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance puts into motion long-term federal recovery programs, some of which are matched by state programs, and designed to help public entities and select non-profits. Public Assistance funds may be used for emergency work and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities and may include debris removal, emergency protective measures, repair of damaged public property, loans needed by communities for essential government functions and grants for public schools.

The Governor also received notification that the Presidential Declaration includes funding to conduct hazard mitigation activities for the entire state. With this funding, Iowa will be able to minimize the impact of future natural disasters by taking steps now to strengthen existing infrastructure.

This Presidential Disaster Declaration is the 14th Major Presidential Disaster Declaration Iowa has received since March 2007, and the third since June. The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division administers the federal funding provided by the declaration and oversees disaster recovery activities.

Earlier this week the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) implemented a freeze on some types of disaster aid in order to extend the remaining balance of the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) while awaiting passage of appropriations legislation. Federal funding from the DRF is still available for removal of debris and emergency protective measures and to meet the immediate needs of disaster survivors. It is unknown at this time what impact the freeze will have on recovery efforts in Iowa.

For more information, please visit www.governor.iowa.gov or www.iowahomelandsecurity.org.

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