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## **President Obama issues Disaster Declaration for 19 Iowa counties**

DES MOINES — Gov. Terry E. Branstad today received word that President Obama approved his request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for 19 Iowa counties **impacted by April's severe weather**.

The counties included in the declaration are: Appanoose, Cedar, Clinton, Davis, Decatur, Des Moines, Iowa, Johnson, Keokuk, Lee, Lucas, Marion, Monroe, Muscatine, Ringgold, Van Buren, Wapello, Warren and Wayne.

The Governor sent the request for the declaration on May 22 in response to significant damage that was caused by heavy rains, thunderstorms and flooding in those counties during the period of April 17-30.

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 Disaster 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 16th Major Presidential Disaster Declaration Iowa has received since March 2007. The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division 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.

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