

LEGISLATIVE VIEWPOINT



New Jersey State League
of Municipalities

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Dear Mayor:

The New Jersey Office of Emergency Management has asked me to forward this important message on the recent Floods to you.

William G Dressel Jr.
Executive Director

NJ Office of Emergency Management



Colonel Rick Fuentes
Superintendent, New Jersey State Police
State Director of Emergency Management

Major Dennis McNulty
Commanding Officer,
Emergency Management

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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NJOEM Preliminary Damage Assessment Facts

In a proactive effort to begin the recovery process directly related to the weekend floods, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management would like to provide New Jersey's mayors and elected officials with the following information regarding the necessary next steps in the recovery process as per federal guidelines.

This initial information package starting with a detailed description of the Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) process will empower residents and local officials while providing them with the knowledge necessary to rebuild their communities and households affected by the storm.

As such, the PDA process is a mechanism used to determine the impact and magnitude of damage caused by a disaster. It summarizes resulting needs of individuals, businesses, public sector, and community as a whole.

A PDA team reviews the types of damage or emergency costs incurred by the state, and the impact to critical facilities, such as: public utilities, hospitals, schools, and fire and police departments.

They will also look at; the effect on individuals and businesses, including the extent of the damage, the number of people displaced, and the threat to health and safety caused by the incident.

Additional data from the Red Cross or other local voluntary agencies may also be reviewed. During the assessment, the team will collect estimates of the expenses and damages.

Who is on the PDA team?

PDA teams are comprised of personnel from FEMA, the state's emergency management agency, county and local officials and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

How is the PDA used?

PDAs are considered, along with several other factors, in determining whether a disaster is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local governments, and that Federal assistance is necessary.

The PDA is typically used as a basis for a State Governor's request for a major disaster or emergency declaration when it shows the cost of response efforts, such as emergency personnel overtime, other emergency services, and damage to citizens is beyond state and local recovery capabilities.

The President considers the PDA as one of the factors in making a determination whether to declare a major disaster or emergency in response to the Governor's request.

Anticipated NJSP/OEM PDA Plan:

We are leaning forward and preparing to conduct PDAs. Although we realize that our local counterparts are still in the response phase, we have requested that they start gathering damage information. Based on our review of the information provided, we may request a Joint PDA from FEMA Region II. Once the recovery phase begins and the hazard has been removed, we will deploy our Damage Assessment Teams. The JPDA Team will include members from FEMA, SBA, NJOEM and local representation.

PDA Steps:

1. Receive raw PDA numbers from the effected communities.
2. Request a Joint PDA
3. Deploy JPDA Teams in the field
4. Complete JPDA and review data.

If the data supports (as per FEMA guidelines/criteria), we will make a recommendation to the Governor to request for a disaster declaration.

Please note that NJOEM and its partners will work in the timeliest manner possible to complete the PDAs. However, to best serve the residents of the state accuracy of data collection will be the primary focus.

All residents and businesses that have experienced flood damage to their property are advised to contact their insurance company and open a claim for damages.

All municipalities are asked to work with their Local and County offices of emergency management on any flood related matter/data collection.

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