

FEMA Continues to Coordinate with Tribal, State and Local Officials, Stands Ready to Support Response Efforts

WASHINGTON - With hurricane watches and warnings in effect for much of the East Coast, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continues to work closely with the governors, tribal and local officials of affected states to ensure they have the resources they need. FEMA stands ready to support state response efforts to Hurricane Irene, and urges all residents in coastal states to take steps now to prepare for severe weather, monitor news and weather reports, and closely follow the instructions of state and local officials.

At a press conference today with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano, National Hurricane Center Director Bill Read, and American Red Cross President Gail McGovern, FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate reiterated the need for residents to heed the weather advisories and follow the directions of local officials.

"Residents and businesses along the East Coast should be taking steps now to prepare for severe weather, and following the instruction of their local officials, including any evacuation orders," said Administrator Fugate. "It's also important to remember that those living further inland can still experience high winds and flash flooding, as well as power outages lasting several days. Visit Ready.gov or Listo.gov for ways to ensure your family, home or business is prepared."

Emergency shelters are being opened in coordination with states, localities and the Red Cross along the East Coast up to New England as evacuations are announced along the coast and low-lying areas. The Red Cross has shelter information available for residents who need to know where they can go. This information continues to be updated as more shelters open at www.redcross.org

There are numerous watches and warnings up and down the East Coast. For the latest information, visit the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's \(NOAA\) National Hurricane Center website](http://NationalOceanicandAtmosphericAdministration.gov).

This morning, Secretary Napolitano and Administrator Fugate briefed President Obama on the steps DHS, FEMA, and federal partners are taking to preposition assets and support state and local officials as they take steps to prepare for the storm. FEMA has been in constant contact through its regional offices (in Atlanta, Boston, New York and Philadelphia), with the governors and local officials of communities along the East Coast.

Under the direction of President Obama and Secretary Janet Napolitano, the entire federal family is leaning forward to support our state, tribal and territorial partners along the East Coast. On Aug.25, the President signed a Pre-disaster Emergency Declaration for the State of North Carolina, making available federal support to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety for 16 counties (Carteret, Craven, Currituck, Dare, Halifax, Hyde, Johnston, Jones, Nash, Northampton, Onslow, Pamlico, Perquimans, Pitt, Tyrrell, and Wilson counties). Also on Aug. 25, New York Governor Cuomo requested a Pre-disaster Emergency Declaration for seven counties. The governor's request is currently under review.

At all times, FEMA maintains commodities, including millions of liters of water, millions of meals and hundreds of thousands of blankets. These items are strategically located at distribution centers throughout the United States and its territories. In Atlanta, for instance, FEMA has more than two million liters of water, **1.3 million meals, 16,000 cots and 56,000 blankets.**

Resources have already been moved to the Incident Support Base (ISB) at Fort Bragg, N.C., a staging and distribution center close to a potentially affected area, so that supplies can be moved quickly throughout nearby areas. FEMA has staged **390,000 meals and more than 380,000 liters of water at Fort Bragg.**

ISBs are also being set up in Massachusetts and New Jersey, to support states within those regions. These commodities are meant to supplement state resources if needed, but it's critical that individuals and families build their own emergency supply kits so that in the event of a disaster, state and local resources can be focused on the most vulnerable citizens.

In advance preparation for the hurricane, FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams are staged in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, New York, Massachusetts, and Vermont, and are en route to the District of Columbia, Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island to coordinate

with state, tribal and local officials to identify needs and shortfalls impacting potential disaster response and recovery.

The Department of Health and Human Services has activated the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS). The NDMS deploys Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) comprised of specially trained medical professions including doctors, nurses, paramedics, EMTs and pharmacists to support medical facilities such as hospitals and health centers by providing emergency health and medical guidance and assistance.

FEMA encourages everyone, regardless of whether they live in a hurricane-prone area, to take steps to ensure their families, homes and businesses are prepared for a possible emergency. As a reminder, the month of September is designated as National Preparedness Month (NPM). This serves as an opportunity to encourage Americans to be prepared for disasters or emergencies in their homes, businesses, and communities. Individuals and families can learn about events and activities, and groups can register to become a NPM Coalition Member by visiting <http://community.fema.gov>. NPM is sponsored by the Ready Campaign in partnership with Citizen Corps and The Ad Council.

Follow FEMA online at <http://blog.fema.gov>, www.twitter.com/fema, www.facebook.com/fema, and www.youtube.com/fema. Also, follow FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate's activities at www.twitter.com/craigatfema.

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FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.