



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 17, 2018

After Touring Damage, Governor Wolf Declares Recent Flooding a Disaster, Will Seek Federal Aid

Harrisburg, PA – Today, Governor Tom Wolf signed a proclamation of disaster emergency for the commonwealth in response to a series of severe rain storms over the past week that caused flash flooding and ensuing damage to homes and businesses throughout much of north and central portions of the state. Governor Wolf has personally toured communities hit hard by the storms in Schuylkill, Bradford and Delaware counties.

“Pennsylvanians in portions of the state hardest hit by heavy rains and subsequent flooding need to know that the state is doing all that it can to help and for that reason I am signing this disaster declaration,” Gov. Wolf said. “This allows the state to seek federal funding for damages and frees up the red tape that can be associated with procuring necessary supplies and services during emergency clean-up.

“Touring these flooded areas and speaking with those affected only confirmed my decision that we need this declaration to enlist all possible help.”

The proclamation is a necessary step in order to ask for a federal disaster declaration through the Federal Emergency Management Agency if damages meet the federal threshold criteria.

“Over the past few days, Governor Wolf and I have heard firsthand the stories of these survivors and I am amazed by their resilience,” said PEMA Director Rick Flinn. “At the same time, I know that some people have been hit with flooding more than once this summer, and we’re committed to doing everything we can to help them.”

It is important to note that the proclamation does not restrict vehicular travel on commonwealth roads, but motorists in areas impacted by flooding are encouraged to allow extra time for travel if roads have not yet been opened.

The proclamation authorizes state agencies to use all available resources and personnel, as necessary, to cope with the magnitude and severity of this emergency situation. The time-consuming bidding and contract procedures, as well as other formalities normally prescribed by law, are waived for the duration of the proclamation.



In addition, the proclamation authorizes the Department of Transportation to waive regulations related to drivers of commercial vehicles in order to ensure the timely movement of commodities, particularly food.

It also provides consumer protections against price gouging by prohibiting companies from charging a price for consumer goods or services that exceeds 20 percent of the average price that the consumer goods or services were sold for in the seven days preceding the effective date of the governor's proclamation.

"As the clean-up continues, Pennsylvanians need to know that my Administration is doing everything it can to help those suffering from this devastating weather emergency," Gov. Wolf said.

The full proclamation text is below.

MEDIA CONTACT: J.J. Abbott, 717-783-1116



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

PROCLAMATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY

August 17, 2018

WHEREAS, an anomalous weather pattern has produced, and continues to produce, slow-moving storms with significant and record-breaking rainfall and subsequent rounds of flash, creek, and river flooding that first began to impact the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on July 21, 2018; and

WHEREAS, the series of slow-moving storms impacted, and continues to impact the entirety of the Commonwealth with relentless rain, hitting portions of central and eastern Pennsylvania with up to 23.0" of rainfall; and



WHEREAS, this emergency event prompted affected county and municipal governments to declare local disaster emergencies due to the severe flash flooding; and

WHEREAS, the emergency event was of such magnitude or severity as to render essential the Commonwealth's supplementation of county and municipal efforts and resources and the activation of all applicable state, county and municipal emergency response plans.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the provisions of section §7301(c) of the Emergency Management Services Code, 35 Pa. C.S. § 7101 et seq., I do hereby proclaim the existence of a disaster emergency in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

FURTHER, I authorized and directed that the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director or designee assume command and control of all statewide emergency operations, and that all Commonwealth departments and agencies, under the direction of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency Director or designee, utilize all available resources and personnel as was deemed necessary to cope with the magnitude and severity of this emergency event.

FURTHER, I hereby transfer up to \$6,000,000 in unused appropriated funds to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, to be increased or decreased as conditions require for expenses authorized and incurred related to this emergency pursuant to section 1508 of the Act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, NO.176) (the Fiscal Code), 72 P.S. § 1508. These funds shall be credited to a special account established by the Office of the Budget. All Commonwealth agencies purchasing supplies or services in response to this emergency are authorized to utilize the emergency procurement procedures set forth in section 516 of the Commonwealth Procurement Code, 62 Pa. C.S. §516. This Proclamation shall serve as the written determination of the basis for the emergency under 62 Pa. C.S. §516; and

FURTHER, I hereby directed the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to staff the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center as necessary for the duration of the



emergency event and to augment it with personnel from other state agencies and departments. I also authorized the Agency to direct and coordinate the emergency response, recovery, and mitigation activities of other state agencies and departments as deemed necessary to deal with the exigencies of this disaster emergency through implementation of the State Emergency Operations Plan; and

FURTHER, I hereby authorized the Secretary of Transportation to use all available equipment, resources, and personnel of the Department, in whatever manner that she deems necessary, to ensure that all state highways in the areas that may be affected by the emergency event are cleared of debris and any other obstructions resulting from this event and to ensure that highways, bridges, roadbeds, and related facilities and structures, including federal-aid highways, that sustained damage in the disaster affected areas are immediately repaired, maintained, reconstructed, or replaced, or that new construction is undertaken where necessary; and

FURTHER, I hereby suspend the provisions of any other regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of Commonwealth business, or the orders, rules or regulations of any Commonwealth agency, if strict compliance with the provisions of any statute, order, rule or regulation would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with this emergency event. All Commonwealth agencies may implement their emergency assignments without regard to procedures required by other laws, except mandatory constitutional requirements, pertaining to the performance of public work, entering into contracts, incurring of obligations, employment of temporary workers, rental of equipment, purchase of supplies and materials, and expenditures of public funds.

GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this 17th day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand eighteen, and of the Commonwealth the two hundred and forty-third.

Tom Wolf

Governor