



STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office of Governor Mark Dayton

130 State Capitol ♦ 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard ♦ Saint Paul, MN 55155

April 26, 2013

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Through:

Andrew Velasquez III, Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region V
536 South Clark Street, Floor 6
Chicago, IL 60605

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request you declare a major disaster for the State of Minnesota as a result of a winter storm beginning April 9th and concluding April 11th.

On April 10, 2013, I issued an Emergency Executive Order to activate the Minnesota National Guard to provide assistance and emergency relief, which also triggered the activation of the state emergency operations center (SEOC), and implementation of the Minnesota Emergency Operations Plan (MEOP). As the storm continued and worsened, I declared a state of emergency on April 11, 2013. The Counties of Cottonwood, Murray, Nobles, and Rock also declared states of emergency, as did the Cities of Luverne, Worthington, Brewster, Bingham, and Windom.

This largely agricultural, southwestern area of the state was hit by a late winter storm that coated trees, roads, and structures with roughly two inches of ice. The weight of the ice buildup caused extensive damage to power and communications infrastructure, including unburied lines. Downed, live power lines posed a significant public safety threat. Fortunately, no one was killed and serious injuries were limited. Widespread loss of power affected electric, heat, and water service to homes, schools, businesses, and fire stations. Outages and power surges damaged computers, communications, security, and HVAC systems, and other essential electrical equipment. It was necessary to transfer non-critical patients from the hospital in Nobles County to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and to relocate 30 assisted living residents in Rock County. Whole communities were effectively shut down for several days, with limited public services and virtually no private amenities. Thousands of detached and hanging tree branches, known colloquially as "widow makers," blocked roadways and presented a significant safety hazard. City, county, and state parks and campgrounds are closed as a safety measure until the debris and dangerous hanging tree limbs can be removed.

In addition to the extensive work of state and local government agencies and public utilities outlined in the enclosed FEMA Form 010-0-13, voluntary organizations, including the Mennonites, Adventist Church, Global Compassion Network, Nechama, Love Inc., Salvation

Army, and American Red Cross contributed thousands of relief hours providing food, shelter, and assistance with debris removal.

The impacts of the ice storm crippled economic activity for nearly a full business week. Large, local employers like JBS-Swift (meat packing) and Heron Lake Bio Energy had to shut down operations because of the power loss. Thousands of employees in the local area weren't able to go to work and earn a paycheck. Suppliers and other ancillary businesses suffered financial losses because of the interruption of commerce. Residents who depend on the agricultural industry of the area, which has already been negatively impacted by drought conditions and a delayed planting season, are not in a position to absorb the costs of this disaster. Some local governments face uninsured expenses equal to half their annual budget.

Preliminary damage assessments (PDA) were conducted April 22-24, 2013, in the Counties of Cottonwood, Jackson, Murray, Nobles, and Rock. FEMA, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM), county emergency managers, and local municipalities, townships, school districts, and rural electric cooperatives participated in each county. Damage surveys provided visual observation of the extent of debris and utility damage. Contractors and government agency employees were busy removing dangerous tree limbs and constructing replacement power lines.

Category A – Freezing rain coated trees throughout the five county region. The weight of two inches of ice caused downed trees, branches, and dangerous hanging limbs, presenting a public health and safety hazard. It is estimated that 252,000 cubic yards of debris was generated. The City of Worthington was the hardest hit, with an estimated 92,000 cubic yards of debris. Due to the volume of the debris, the Cities of Luverne, Worthington, and Windom had to contract out debris removal. Smaller cities in the area have no public works staff or equipment to clear debris and had to turn to county and state highway departments, as well as contractors, for assistance. Significantly adding to the debris burden are the more than 3,000 destroyed rural electric cooperative utility poles and 170 miles of unsalvageable power lines. The debris damages were researched with insurance companies and there is virtually no insurance to cover these losses. The estimated debris costs for Nobles County is \$100.79 per capita.

Category B – Rural electric cooperatives and municipal electric companies spent nine days restoring power to the area. Temporary repairs to restore power for heat, water, medical equipment, communications, and food preservation totaled \$3.534 million. Several fire departments were called out to barricade roads, extinguish tree fires, and assist with accidents from the ice-covered roads. No insurance coverage is available for these expenses. In several small communities, costs of responding to this disaster consumed their annual public works budgets. The emergency protective measures for Jackson County are estimated at 66.96 per capita.

Category F – The ice buildup on trees, towers, and power lines caused approximately 3,000 utility poles to snap, 832 miles of utility lines to be damaged, and communications to be lost in the region for up to 48 hours. Utility repair crews were brought in from other states as power companies activated their mutual aid agreements. Electric lines and poles are not

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insurable. Utility repair is the highest category of damage at 72 percent of the overall disaster. Power outages to more than 100,000 customers were reported. Utility crews worked for nine days splicing lines and getting temporary services up. The utility companies in the region are now beginning permanent restoration, which will take months. Murray County, with a population of 8,725, has a per capita cost of \$199.11 for utility restoration.

Given the burden of previous disasters, the State of Minnesota needs federal help to recover from this crisis. Minnesota is still working on 13 open federally declared disasters and one state declared disaster. Minnesota's most recent Stafford Act disaster occurred just ten months ago, in June 2012 (FEMA-4069-DR), when a succession of severe storms and flooding caused historic damage to extensive areas of the state. The State Legislature appropriated \$159.656 million to deal with the aftermath of FEMA-4069-DR. In addition, the Legislature provided \$5.8 million in assistance to the counties affected by a windstorm that occurred July 2, 2013. We are working hard during the current legislative session to close an approximately \$627 million budget deficit. Without federal assistance for this disaster, that challenge will be even more daunting.

Please consider that while state and local governments and voluntary agencies continue the recovery from this ice storm and previous disasters, we are expending resources in preparation for imminent major spring flooding in the Red River of the North in northwest Minnesota. We will likely begin to experience those effects next week.

Should this request for Stafford Act assistance be approved expeditiously, the Minnesota Legislature will be able to act before the current session's scheduled adjournment on May 20, 2013, avoiding the need for a costly special session.

The people of Minnesota are resilient and typically only reluctantly ask for help. On their behalf, I respectfully request your approval of this request.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Dayton
Governor

cc: Ms. Kris A. Eide, Director, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division
Minnesota Department of Public Safety

Enclosures:
OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13
Enclosure B: Public Assistance

**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY**

1. Request Date Apr 26, 2013

Burden Disclosure Notice

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009) **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State requesting declaration (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. 5122) Minnesota	2b. State Population (as reported by 2010 Census) 5,303,925
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3. Governor's Name Mark Dayton	4a. Designation of State Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number Kris A. Eide, (651) 201-7404
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4b. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number
Kris A. Eide, (651) 201-7404

6. Declaration Request For: Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401) Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501(a))

7. Incident Period Beginning Date Apr 9, 2013 End Date Apr 11, 2013 or Continuing *If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).*

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

- Drought Earthquake Explosion Fire Flood Hurricane Landslide Mudslide
 Severe Storm (rain, high water, wind-driven rain, hail, lightning) Snowstorm (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data) Straight-Line Winds
 Tidal Wave Tornado Tropical Depression Tropical Storm Tsunami Volcanic Eruption Winter Storm
 Other (please specify) _____

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's cover letter.
The five rural electric cooperatives that service these counties reported extensive damage to power lines, poles, and distribution systems. The main transmission line providing power to the majority of Jackson County was damaged, resulting in power outages of up to four days. Two major substations lost power in the city of Worthington. The Nobles County Sheriff estimated 90 to 95 percent of the county was without power. A 500 foot radio transmission tower snapped from the weight of ice buildup. Communications were down and roads were ice- and debris-covered, isolating several communities from local and regional emergency response resources. Downed power lines started numerous tree fires, threatening nearby structures. The city of Fulda had to manually pump their lift stations and pump water from a lake because of the lack of electricity to the water tower. Township roads sustained extensive damage from heavy repair trucks. The overwhelming volume of debris forced the city of Windom in Cottonwood County to contract for disaster cleanup. Schools and businesses were closed for from two to five days.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's cover letter.
The National Guard was deployed to open up the Luverne Armory and house approximately 35 residents and staff from South Western Youth Services, The Minnesota Department of Transportation had six ARMER towers running on backup generation to provide communications. MNDOT also assisted with debris clearance to open up roadways. The Minnesota State Patrol and local law enforcement agencies responded to numerous crashes and assisted with traffic control. The Minnesota Department of Health's regional staff performed check-ins with long-term care facilities in Rock and Nobles Counties. Minnesota VOAD responded to debris cleanup requests. Many communities (approximately 16 in the first 72 hours) set up shelters to provide heat, power and food for residents and travelers. Worthington and Adrian implemented rolling blackouts, allowing residents 45 minutes of heat several times a day for the first 48 hours.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment*

Individual Assistance Dates Performed Requested _____ Start _____ End _____

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

Public Assistance Dates Performed Requested Apr 17, 2013 Start Apr 22, 2013 End Apr 24, 2013

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

N/A

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance N/A Individual and Households Program Crisis Counseling Program Disaster Unemployment Assistance Program
 All Disaster Case Management Disaster Legal Services

For the following jurisdictions (specify counties, parishes, independent cities) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation.

Identify Federally recognized Tribes in the requested counties.

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance N/A Debris Removal (Category A) Emergency Protective Measures (Category B) Permanent Work (Categories C-G)
(not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, parishes, independent cities) If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions, please enclose additional documentation.
Counties of Cottonwood, Jackson, Murray, Nobles, and Rock

Identify Federally recognized Tribes included in the requested counties.
N/A

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*

Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

Request for Direct Federal Assistance

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:

b. List of reasons why State and local governments cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. 206.208, the State agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State Agreement; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

Request for Snow Assistance

N/A I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation* Statewide OR

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities.

12. Mitigation Plan Information*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date Mar 25, 2014 b. Type of Plan Enhanced Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirement from Other Federal Agencies. I do anticipate requirement from Other Federal Agencies.

Please see **Enclosure C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs** for additional information in support of this request.

14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.

b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State law and have directed the execution of the State Emergency Plan on Apr 11, 2013 in accordance with the Stafford Act.

c. The State and local governments will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

Cover Letter Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)* Enclosure B (Public Assistance)*

Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs) Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)

Additional Supporting Documentation _____


Governor's Signature


Date

If anyone except the Governor signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

