

# ADVISOR



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## SEVERE WEATHER IN CONNECTICUT

The State of Connecticut first experienced heavy rainfall and documented hurricane force wind gusts from March 12, 2010 through March 15, 2010. Many areas of the state received between 4 to 5 inches of rainfall in a 24 hour period and winds that gusted up to 75 miles per hour in Fairfield County in Southwestern Connecticut. One example of the heavy rainfall was in the town of Deep River in Middlesex County, which received 5.02 inches. Many municipalities in New London County also received in excess of 4 inches of rainfall. For example, Norwich received 4.7 inches and Old Lyme received 4.26 inches. The areas most affected by both the combined effects of wind and rain were in Fairfield County in Southwestern Connecticut. The coast of Fairfield County is along the North Shore of Western Long Island Sound. Coastal areas from the Bronx, New York East across Southern Westchester County, New York and East across Southern Fairfield County from Greenwich to Southport, Connecticut, experienced East winds sustained at 40-50 miles per hour during this wind event. In addition to the 4.05 inches of rainfall in Greenwich (which completely saturated soils and weakened the root systems of trees), documented wind gusts of 62 miles per hour and 75 miles per hour were recorded at the White Plains Airport and at JFK Airport (The two closest operational NWS Weather Stations) respectively. Local observations in Norwalk, Bridgeport (Success Hill), and Westport in coastal Fairfield County reported documented wind gusts of 65, 60 and 58 miles per hour, respectively. These wind speeds represent a range from a strong tropical storm to a Category I Hurricane and combined with the saturated soils caused major tree damage in Fairfield County.

In Greenwich, Fairfield County, 400 of 700 roads were impassable due to a combination of fallen trees and energized power lines. Public schools in six towns were closed for a week during the first March event; another seven closed for an extended period of time during the second event.

Next, on March 23, 2010, additional heavy rainfall of 1.5 to 3.2 inches again filled already swollen

## FROM THE COMMISSIONER

### WEATHER and TERROR

The hurricane-force winds in Fairfield County in early March and the 500-year flooding experienced in southeastern Connecticut later that same month, are powerful reminders of the force of nature. They are also reminders of why we can't wait until an emergency occurs to begin planning and preparations for things that go bad. The actions by first responders and other municipal response teams, state agencies, the private sector and members of the public during

these storms demonstrated the resiliency that is part of our heritage here in Connecticut.

We were also reminded of the ongoing threat of terrorism from both home-grown and foreign-based extremism with the attempted car bombing in Time Square and the connections to that attempt with communities here in Connecticut. Through the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and the state intelligence fusion center (CTIC) we received early word of the event as it

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**Peter J. Boynton**  
**Commissioner**

# SEVERE WEATHER IN CONNECTICUT

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rivers, streams and saturated the soil in Connecticut. This episode is significant in that it did not allow the state's rivers to recover from the March 12 – 15 episode prior to the next heavy rainfall episode 6 days later.

Finally, on March 29, 2010 and March 30, 2010, the state was struck by a third and the most severe of the heavy rain episodes. During a 36-hour period, heavy rainfall totaling from 4 to 10 inches occurred across the state. The heaviest rainfall occurred in Southeastern, CT where some locations received up to 10 inches of rain in 36-hours. Preliminary information from the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Connecticut Department of Transportation indicates that the flooding and subsequent damage in New London County, Connecticut ranged from the 25-year to the 500-year event (measured with regard to flooding or water flow) on many rivers and streams. Specifically, in at least 8 different locations in New London County, the Connecticut Department of Transportation records indicate that 500-year water flows were reached.

From March 30 through April 3, 2010, the State Emergency Operations Center was fully activated. In addition to DEMHS, the State EOC was staffed with representatives from state agencies such as the Departments of Environmental Protection, Transportation, Public Health, Consumer Protection, Insurance, Economic and Community Development, Connecticut State Police, Commission on Fire Prevention and Control.

DEMHS Urban Search and Rescue Team was on standby. The Connecticut Military Department, including the National Guard, was at the State EOC as well as elsewhere throughout the state. Federal partners at the State EOC or at other locations included the U.S. Army

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## FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

[From FEMA.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

### Response and Recovery

First Response to a disaster is the job of local government's emergency services with help from nearby municipalities, the state and volunteer agencies. In a catastrophic disaster, and if the governor requests, federal resources can be mobilized through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for search and rescue, electrical power, food, water, shelter and other basic human needs.

It is the long-term **Recovery** phase of disaster which places the most severe financial strain on a local or state government. Damage to public facilities and infrastructure, often not insured, can overwhelm even a large city.

A governor's request for a major disaster declaration could mean an infusion of federal funds, but the governor must also commit significant state funds and resources for recovery efforts.

**A Major Disaster** could result from a hurricane, earthquake, flood, tornado or major fire which the President determines warrants supplemental federal aid. The event must be clearly more than state or local governments can handle alone. If declared, funding comes from the President's Disaster Relief Fund, which is managed by FEMA, and disaster aid programs of other participating

federal agencies.

**A Presidential Major Disaster Declaration** puts into motion long-term federal recovery programs, some of which are matched by state programs, and designed to help disaster victims, businesses and public entities.

**An Emergency Declaration** is more limited in scope and without the long-term federal recovery programs of a Major Disaster Declaration. Generally, federal assistance and funding are provided to meet a specific emergency need or to help prevent a major disaster from occurring.

### The Major Disaster Process

A Major Disaster Declaration usually follows these steps:

- **Local Government Responds**, supplemented by neighboring communities and volunteer agencies. If overwhelmed, turn to the state for assistance;
- **The State Responds** with state resources, such as the National Guard and state agencies;
- **Damage Assessment** by local, state, federal, and volunteer

# FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

organizations determines losses and recovery needs;

- **A Major Disaster Declaration** is requested by the governor, based on the damage assessment, and an agreement to commit state funds and resources to the long-term recovery;
- **FEMA Evaluates** the request and recommends action to the White House based on the disaster, the local community and the state's ability to recover;
- **The President approves** the request or FEMA informs the governor it has been denied. This decision process could take a few hours or several weeks depending on the nature of the disaster.

[Learn more about the disaster declaration process](#)

## Disaster Aid Programs

There are three major categories of disaster aid:

### Individual Assistance

Immediately after the declaration, disaster workers arrive and set up a central field office to coordinate the recovery effort. A toll-free telephone number is published for use by affected residents and business owners in registering for assistance. Disaster Recovery Centers also are opened where disaster victims can meet with program representatives and obtain information about available aid and the recovery process.

Disaster aid to individuals generally falls into the following categories:

- **Disaster Housing** may be available for up to 18 months, using local resources, for displaced persons whose residences were heavily damaged or destroyed. Funding also can be provided for housing repairs and replacement of damaged items to make homes habitable.
- **Disaster Grants**, are available to help meet other serious disaster related needs and necessary expenses not covered by insurance and other aid programs. These may include replacement of personal property, and transportation, medical, dental and funeral expenses.
- **Low-Interest Disaster Loans** are available after a disaster for homeowners and renters from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to cover uninsured property losses. Loans may be for repair or replacement of homes, automobiles, clothing or other damaged personal property. Loans are also available to businesses for property loss and economic injury.
- **Other Disaster Aid Programs** include crisis counseling, disaster-related unemployment assistance, legal aid and assistance with income tax, Social Security and Veteran's benefits. Other state or local help may also be available.

property is inspected to verify the loss. If approved, an applicant will soon receive a check for rental assistance or a grant. Loan applications require more information and approval may take several weeks after application. The deadline for most individual assistance programs is 60 days following the President's major disaster declaration.

Audits are done later to ensure that aid went to only those who were eligible and that disaster aid funds were used only for their intended purposes. These federal program funds cannot duplicate assistance provided by other sources such as insurance.

After a major disaster, FEMA tries to notify all disaster victims about the available aid programs and urge them to apply. The news media are encouraged to visit a Disaster Recovery Center, meet with disaster officials, and help publicize the disaster aid programs and the toll-free teleregistration number.

[Learn more about Individual Assistance](#)

### Public Assistance

Public Assistance is aid to state or local governments to pay part of the costs of rebuilding a community's damaged infrastructure. Generally, public assistance programs pay for 75 per cent of the approved project costs. Public Assistance may include debris removal, emergency protective measures and public services, repair of damaged public property, loans needed by communities for essential government functions and grants for public schools.

[Learn more about Public Assistance](#)

### Hazard Mitigation

Disaster victims and public entities are encouraged to avoid the life and property risks of future disasters. Examples include the elevation or relocation of chronically flood-damaged homes away from flood hazard areas, retrofitting buildings to make them resistant to earthquakes or strong winds, and adoption and enforcement of adequate codes and standards by local, state and federal government. FEMA helps fund damage mitigation measures when repairing disaster-damaged structures and through the Hazard Mitigation.

[Learn more about Hazard Mitigation Assistance](#)

**Assistance Process** – After the application is taken, the damaged



(Continued from page 1)

was unfolding that Saturday night. The DEMHS Office of Counter Terrorism coordinated closely with their counterparts in New York in the days that followed. This was a good example of collaboration between agencies at all levels and across state lines, and that collaboration is key to our ability to be resilient against the ongoing threat of terrorism. Our strength lies in our ability to work together. A key lesson from the Times Square event was the roles played not only by those in uniform, but significantly, the role played by a member of the public.

The Times Square T-shirt vendor, set a great example of 'see something, say something'. This is a concept that DEMHS will be working to share with the public here in Connecticut in the months to come. That T-shirt vendor knew his corner of New York City as well as anyone, and perhaps better than most. The same holds true for our 3.4 million neighbors here in Connecticut who know their corner or their neighborhood or their commuting route or workplace better than most. They are the ones most likely to recognize something unusual that should be reported. We will be working to inform and encourage our neighbors to play their part in helping to keep us safe.

Weather and terror both require preparation and both benefit from the ability to be resilient. Being resilient means being able to WITHSTAND, being able to RECOVER, and being able to ADAPT to reduce our vulnerability for the inevitable next time. DEMHS is part of a national resiliency policy forum that includes participation at the national level with a diverse and knowledgeable group ranging from municipal service chiefs, to academics, to the Oakridge National Weapons Laboratory, to White House staff, and other federal and state officials. Through DEMHS, Connecticut is part of the 'resiliency' initiative and we will look for opportunities to use that concept here to improve our ability to withstand, recover and adapt to any weather or terror event.

Be Ready,

Peter Boynton

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## THE CONNECTICUT JOINT FIELD OFFICE (JFO)

When the Nutmeg State was slammed with severe wind and rain storms during the month of March, Governor Rell requested a federal disaster declaration to assist in the response and recovery efforts underway. The President approved the request, and FEMA began immediately to establish a disaster management operation in the Wallingford area.

Within 48 hours of signing a lease on a previously empty one-story office building, FEMA Logistics

turned 23,000 square feet of space into the Connecticut disaster's **Joint Field Office (JFO)** with tables, chairs, computers, telephones, fax and copy machines and everything else needed in an office operation, right down to staples and paperclips. More than 70 FEMA employees, representing a variety of disciplines and geographic locations began arriving in Wallingford, filling area hotels and reaching out to their emergency man-

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# June 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

# July 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## EVENTS AND TRAINING

### JUNE

- June 7&8—[ICS 300 Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents](#), Maxim Rd., Hartford
- June 8—ICS 300 Intermediate Incident Command June 8, [MTG 312 - Senior Officials Workshop \(TEEX\)](#) - East Hartford
- June 10&11—[ICS 400 Advanced ICS Command and General Staff—Complex Incidents](#), Maxim Rd. Hartford
- June 24—[WebEOC Training](#)

### JULY

- July 6&7—[ICS 300 Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents](#) AMR New Haven
- July 8&9—[ICS 400 Advanced ICS Command and General Staff—Complex Incidents](#) AMR New Haven
- July 13-15—[PA Project Specialist L-381](#), Hartford CT

# SEVERE WEATHER IN CONNECTICUT

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Corps of Engineers, FEMA Region 1 representatives, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the United States Navy. Nongovernmental organizations included the Red Cross, United Way 2-1-1, and the Salvation Army. United Illuminating and Connecticut Light and Power Companies also staffed the State EOC, as well as their own emergency operations centers.

Throughout this time period, many key state and local roads and interstate highways were closed. The State EOC and DEMHS Regional Offices received numerous requests from towns for assistance. Over 40,000 sand bags were distributed by the State. DEMHS coordinated mutual aid resources such as portable and mobile pumps. The Connecticut Departments of Environmental Protection and Transportation monitored and inspected dams and bridges. In addition to other emergency management activities, DEMHS coordinated with utility companies and local jurisdictions to address power restoration concerns.

The Connecticut National Guard (CTNG) played a key role, particularly in response to the second severe weather episode. The CTNG was activated to support the local and state response to the disaster. The CTNG responded to numerous missions including retrieval of sandbags from Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and sandbag deployment as well as numerous pump outs. The CTNG was instrumental in securing a newly constructed \$16 million Sewage Treatment facility in Jewett City (Griswold) that was under threat of flooding. When local fire mutual aid was overwhelmed, the Guard assisted by responding with large mobile pumps and staffed this operation for an extended period to keep the facility safe. The CTNG also worked with local citizens to shore up the sandbagging of the facility. CTNG members also staffed the Connecticut EOC as well as staffing their own center. In addition, numerous types of support were on standby for several days including aviation, marine, and rescue and support units.

Local municipalities in the state took many actions to lessen the impact of the severe weather episode. A total of thirteen shelters were reported opened, either by local officials or through the assistance of the American Red Cross, to support numerous evacuees who either needed to evacuate due to flooding conditions or due to a lack of power. In one case (Westport) most of the sheltered population were displaced residents of a special needs group home. In addition, at least six families were supported by providing them with local hotel accommodations. Further information on evacuations

can be found in Section III, "Impacts." At least 9 local emergency operation centers were reported as activated in response to the severe weather conditions and at least five local emergencies were declared.

In addition to downed wires responses, the local first responder community also addressed countless flooded residences and businesses, motor vehicle accidents, damaged structures, hazardous material incidents, and carbon monoxide issues (due to generators). Local responders addressed debris management issues resulting from the storm, which led to debris storage problems as well as incurring the costs to remove all debris. The State of Connecticut set up a staging area at Sherwood Island State Park in Westport, and also assisted in local debris clean-up.

Many local municipalities also activated their Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to assist them in their response. In some cases, CERT team members were utilized for shelter support while others assisted in traffic control and community services.

During these episodes, in addition to CERT activations, numerous relief organizations were called upon to assist with the emergency. The Salvation Army provided canteen services in Norwich, the Southern Baptists offered residential clean-up support, and the American Red Cross (ARC) provided sheltering capabilities. Over 150 residents utilized the ARC shelters. In addition, the ARC was ready to supply additional housing and emergency relief services to the affected communities. The group even performed their own damage assessments to determine their possible case load.

The Red Cross provided over 4500 meals or snacks during this March weather event. Hundreds of Red Cross volunteers and personnel also provided thousands of bulk distribution items, including comfort kits, clean up kits, and other bulk items.

Throughout the event, United Way of Connecticut's 2-1-1 Infoline received calls for information and referrals. Examples of the referrals requested included over 160 questions about food stamp assistance (due to food spoilage), food pantries, utility assistance, or local emergency services, as well as numerous other general inquiries.

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agement counterparts in DEMHS, establishing a rhythm of delivering disaster assistance to meet the requirements of the flood-affected municipalities.

Mike Parker, a retired U.S. Army officer, member of FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officer cadre and a veteran of numerous federal disasters, was named by President Obama to lead the Connecticut disaster from the federal side. Mike, from day one, has received counsel and strong support from Commissioner Boynton, Director Hackett and numerous other DEMHS staffers, as we continue the federal/state partnership, so vital in the delivery of disaster assistance under a federal declaration. If unable to attend personally, DEMHS staff is invited to participate via conference call in the JFO's twice weekly senior staff meetings. Their input is strongly encouraged and always welcomed. The JFO maintains an office for the resident DEMHS liaison, who is available, on a moment's notice, to attend meetings and review any documents that require state approval.

The Presidential disaster declaration for Connecticut authorized federal dollars in the form of Public Assistance to repair eligible infrastructure damages incurred in three of the State's eight counties. The repair costs, under the Congressionally-mandated Robert Stafford Disaster Assistance Act, will be shared on a 75% federal, 25% local share, the standard cost share for federal disasters.

In those early days of the JFO, as FEMA's Logistics team was initializing computers and issuing cell phones, FEMA's disaster assistance professionals were reaching out to DEMHS to schedule Applicant Briefings. Four such meetings were held in a matter of days. The next step in the assistance delivery process was to invite applicants to Kick-off meetings, where damage information was gathered and explanations about the federal disaster assistance program were provided. To date more than 55 Kick-off meetings have

been held with about 20 more remaining on the schedule.

When establishing the JFO, no matter where it might be located – an empty department store, empty office complex, or warehouse, from the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico to any of the 50 states and the U.S. territories in the South Pacific, FEMA is always asked how long will the JFO be open and how long will there be a FEMA presence in a state or territory. The answer is always the same..."As long as it takes to work ourselves out of a job, as we deliver disaster assistance to all eligible applicants." And that is true for the good folks in Connecticut.

- CT's FEMA JFO Team



M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 28, 2010

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## **Governor Rell: President Approves Appeal for FEMA Flood Aid for Residents, Businesses**

*Governor Filed Appeal of Earlier Denial Just 24 Hours Ago*

Governor M. Jodi Rell tonight announced that President Obama – responding within 24 hours of an appeal spearheaded by the Governor – has reversed an earlier decision and approved federal disaster assistance for homeowners, renters and businesses affected by the severe storms that swept through Connecticut in March.

"This is wonderful news – and it is exactly the right decision," Governor Rell said. "The information we provided just a day ago to the federal government demonstrated conclusively that Connecticut's residents and employers suffered major, unreimbursed losses from these storms. They need help – and now they are getting it.

"The response to our request for people to report damage to the state was tremendous, and I want to thank the people who helped us make this appeal stronger," the Governor said. "Connecticut residents are resilient people – but nature is a force to be reckoned with and sometimes even the strongest need help. The damage from flooding, the week-long power outages and the high winds and downed trees was astonishing.

"I also want to thank the Federal Emergency Management Agency officials who assisted us in our appeal, the DEMHS officials who worked so hard pulling it together, and the state's Congressional delegation who supported us so effectively," the Governor said. "This is a team effort – all on behalf of our residents."

President Obama, in April, had initially denied a request for federal aid to affected individuals in Fairfield, Middlesex, New London, New Haven and Windham counties in response to severe storms that struck on March 12-14 and March 29-31. The president did grant Governor Rell's request for a "major disaster declaration" that allowed financial assistance to the state and municipal governments in Fairfield, Middlesex and New London counties.

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*FOCUS ON:*  
**GLASTONBURY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT'S**  
 —*JOHN WALTON*

This past March, at the 2010 Heroes of Northern and Eastern Connecticut Breakfast Celebration, John Walton was presented with the Spirit of the Red Cross Award. The mission of the Red Cross is to provide relief to victims of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. This is something John strives to do every day.

When John Walton retired over a decade ago, he wanted to find a way to use his experience and his knowledge to help others. John had a background in project management in advanced electrical, electronic, radio telecommunications, interoperability and computer-internet technology. He decided to join Glastonbury Emergency Management Team.

While volunteering there, John planned, designed, and implemented a state-of-the-art



DEMHS Commissioner Peter Boynton and Public Affairs Manager of Pratt and Whitney, Heather Summerer presented the award to John on March 4, 2010



John and the Glastonbury Emergency Management Team

emergency response and communications system, and he procured the grant funding for the project. John has trained and certified many residents interested in becoming members of the Emergency Management Team. He has used his knowledge of radio telecommunications systems to assist with health and safety incidents occurring at community events. John has also trained Boy Scouts in the use of radios for emergency communications.

To this day, John continues to work in emergency management in an on-going effort to prepare for and coordinate efforts during large-scale emergency incidents and to help mitigate the effects of these incidents.

John's actions exemplify the American Red Cross humanitarian spirit and commitment to preparedness and response.

**If You See Something Suspicious... Say Something!**

**1-866-HLS-TIPS**

**in an emergency contact  
 your local police - 911**

**For Connecticut's Homeland Security**



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