

STATE OF NEBRASKA
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
March 24, 2019

CONTACTS:

Taylor Gage, (402) 471-1970

Taylor.gage@nebraska.gov

Alyssa Sanders, (402) 405-6137

Alyssa.sanders@nebraska.gov

Mike Wight, (402) 471-7428

State Response: By the Numbers

Lincoln, Neb. – On March 13, when the State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) opened in anticipation of flooding and a blizzard, no one could have predicted what was ahead.

Today, on the 12th day of operations, numbers reflecting impact and response are coming to light.

Agriculture (NDA)

- NDA relief efforts by the numbers:
A total of 186 donations have been logged including:
 - 12 for equipment
 - 14 for transportation
 - 13 for fencing
 - 70 for hay
 - 14 for other animal feed
 - 10 for other animal supplies
 - 26 for services and labor include vet care
 - 7 offers to coordinate a local donation drive
 - 3 offers of pasture
 - 2 offers of animal housing
 - 59 logged requests for help including both immediate (feed) and longer term items like fencing.
- Farmers and ranchers in need of assistance should contact their local emergency manager. A list of emergency managers can be found at:
<https://nema.nebraska.gov/overview/county-emergency-management-directors-coordinators>.
- For more information, contact 800-831-0550 or nda.nebraska.gov. Current primary needs are hay, fencing, volunteers, & equipment.

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) and the Department of Health and Human Services have been working to ensure safe drinking water is restored to flood affected communities.

Of the 606 community public water systems across the state, 14 were temporarily unable to provide water to customers, nine boil-water advisories have been issued, and five do-not-consume advisories have been issued. Full service has been restored to all but four systems, with five boil-water and four do-not-consume orders still in place as of Sunday morning.

Producers who have lost livestock are asked to photo document losses and bury animals according to regulations. Renderers are unable to get to some sites and are cannot keep up with demand. Information of burial can be found on the DEQ website:

<http://deq.ne.gov/Publica.nsf/Pages/06-201>

NDEQ and the Nebraska Energy Office is working with power industry and pipelines to ensure reliability and continuous service. NEO is also working with weatherization and loan participants offering low interest loans for HVAC and other energy efficiency issues for flood recovery.

Other NDEQ activities include:

- Through cooperation with EPA Region 7 and DHHS, a mobile testing laboratory was set up in Fremont, Norfolk, and Verdigre to help private well owners determine their water quality. Through March 23, 226 private well samples were analyzed for total coliform and E. coli bacteria. The public was very receptive and thankful. Approximately 30% of the results indicated the presence of bacteria.
- Working with FEMA and EPA to activate special disaster assistance in collecting, managing, and proper disposal of containers of hazardous substances.
- Currently working with 94 animal feeding operations to ensure their waste water lagoons are able to sustain their integrity during flooding and increased runoff conditions.
- Working with individuals and communities for overall recovery and restoration of vital services.
- Working with livestock producers on safe disposal of animal mortalities and other flood affected products.
- Coordinating with local emergency at the county and community level for specific and special needs.
- Working with Nebraska Department of Transportation concerning construction storm water permitting. Normally, notification related to construction stormwater permits should be submitted prior to construction, but flood recovery work defers the submission up to 30 days.
- Assisted the Ethanol industry to allow production to continue through waived notification requirements since transportation of rail has been compromised.
- Developed critical guidance documentation for affected communities and individuals to outline safe and efficient handling and disposal of flood debris.

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

- DHHS has facilitated the movement of over 400 pallets of bottled water, or roughly 21 full semi-trucks. This includes deliveries into warehouse storage, delivery from warehouse to impacted sites, and direct delivery to impacted sites.
- Currently tracking hospital and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) status and availability. One hospital has stopped taking patients due to flood damage (Lynch), and a second hospital prepared to evacuate (though no evacuation was ultimately needed).
- Eight nursing home facilities were evacuated, including over 200 residents. Residents are beginning to move back to the facilities.
- Two assisted living facilities were evacuated; all residents have since been allowed to return.
- Providing behavioral health staffing for the NEMA call center.

Department of Transportation (NDOT)

- Inspection teams have been out assessing damage and prioritizing repairs.
- To date, 1309 miles of highway have reopened; 258 miles of highway are still closed.
- There are 15 damaged bridges on State Highways.
- NDOT District 2 worked to find a low-water route for supplies into Fremont that brought much needed supplies. Fremont had been cut off, because all highways in and out were closed.
- For road conditions, contact 511, www.511nebraska.gov, or download the free mobile app.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Since the declaration by President Donald J. Trump, homeowners and renters in nine counties in Nebraska (Butler, Cass, Colfax, Dodge, Douglas, Nemaha, Sarpy and Washington) who were impacted by the severe weather events beginning March 9, 2019, are eligible to apply for federal disaster assistance.

Additional counties may be added assessments are completed and submitted to FEMA.

FEMA suggests the following steps be taken to being recovery:

- **Report your damage to your local emergency manager.** This helps provide information about locations and extent of damage that can be used to assess additional recovery needs for your jurisdiction.
- **Call your insurance agent.** There may be coverage for your losses under a traditional homeowner's or renter's policy or under a flood insurance policy.
- **Document your damage.** Take photos or video. Make lists of damage items.
- **Register with FEMA.** The process is free, take about 20 minutes and is available three ways:
 - Register online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov
 - Use your smartphone to register through <http://m.FEMA.gov>; click "Apply Online for FEMA Assistance," and you will be directed to www.DisasterAssistance.gov.

- Register by phone using FEMA’s toll-free registration line by calling 800-621-FEMA (3362). If you use TTY, call 800-462-7585 or use 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS) to call 800-621-3362. Telephone registration is available 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week.
- **Be ready to register.** When calling the FEMA number, be prepared to provide your current address, the address of the damaged property, contact information where FEMA can reach you, your social security number, the makeup of your household (occupants), insurance, and income information.
- **Register, even if you are insured.** Your insurance may not cover everything, and some damage may not show up until later. Do not wait until you have settled with your insurer to register with FEMA.

Nebraska 211

The Heartland United Way 211 is a resource for information including shelter needs, cleanup, food, clothing, etc. If you encounter difficulty reaching them by dialing 211, please call 866-813-1731.

NEMA

- The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) continues to address needs and direct resources across the State. NEMA coordinated efforts to get technicians onto the lateral well fields on the Platte River near the Ashland Bridge to repair electrical service to the well pumps that serve the city of Lincoln.
- The NEMA website - www.nema.nebraska.gov - is a good resource for current conditions, photos and video, and information on what to do after returning home.
- The NEMA call center has fielded more than 150 calls.

NEMA Call Center 402-817-1551

NEMA Joint Information Center has established a hotline currently staffed 24-hours-a-day to connect those impacted with needed resources. When possible, the call center is staffed with Spanish speaking operators and mental health professionals.

Nebraska National Guard (NENG)

The NENG has delivered:

- 12 pallets of water
- 300 cots
- 9 pallets of medical supplies
- 320 slung sandbags at Linoma Beach
- 500 total sandbags placed at Cooper Power Plant
- 230 sandbags placed at Loup Canal
- 22 bales of hay dropped for cattle feeding in Columbus and Richland

In addition:

- 111 people, 13 pets have been rescued
- 400+ NENG personnel are supporting relief efforts

Nebraska Strong

- Governor Pete Ricketts declared last Friday #NebraskaStrong Day, a day of giving to the relief effort. Radio and television stations, local celebrities and others joined together to encourage donations. The total of donations at the end of the day was \$436,719.
- Those who are looking for a one-stop option for donations can go to the #NebraskaStrong website: www.nebraska.gov/nebraska-strong. A variety of non-profit relief agencies are available for donations.
- Visitors to the NebraskaStrong website can also list specific resource needs, and those with resources to donate can connect with those in need.

Red Cross and Other Volunteer Organizations

- There are currently six shelters open with a population of 177 people. Shelters are located in Bristow, Bellevue, Fremont, Snyder, Albion, and Omaha. Officials are looking at the possibility of consolidating shelters and are examining long-term housing options.
- To date, 10,330 meals have been served.
- A volunteer reception center has been set up in Fremont.
- More than 45 organizations are ready to assist with identified needs.

Small Business Administration (SBA)

If you are located in a declared disaster area, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA). What Types of Disaster Loans are Available?

- Business Physical Disaster Loans – Loans to businesses to repair or replace disaster-damaged property owned by the business, including real estate, inventories, supplies, machinery and equipment. Businesses of any size are eligible. Private, non-profit organizations such as charities, churches, private universities, etc., are also eligible.
- Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) – Working capital loans to help small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most private, non-profit organizations of all sizes meet their ordinary and necessary financial obligations that cannot be met as a direct result of the disaster. These loans are intended to assist through the disaster recovery period.
- Home Disaster Loans – Loans to homeowners or renters to repair or replace disaster-damaged real estate and personal property, including automobiles.
- Information can be found at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>

###