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Damage Assessments to be Conducted in Six Counties

DES MOINES – The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) will be conducting joint damage assessments with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and local officials following the tornadoes and severe weather on April 9.

Teams will conduct joint preliminary damage assessments (PDAs) April 18–19 for federal Individual Assistance and Public Assistance programs. The teams conducting the PDAs will be comprised of representatives from state, local and federal governments.

Individual Assistance joint PDA teams will review damages in five counties: Buena Vista, Ida, Monona, Pocahontas and Sac. The Individual Assistance program provides assistance to home owners and small businesses, including temporary housing, disaster unemployment assistance and replacement or repair costs for eligible applicants.

Public Assistance joint PDA teams will review damages in six counties: Buena Vista, Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Pocahontas and Sac. The Public Assistance program provides to public entities and select nonprofit agencies funding to rebuild damaged infrastructure that may include roads, bridges, culverts, and other public facilities, or to cover costs of emergency work during and debris removal after the storms.

Data from the joint PDAs could be used by Governor Branstad to request a Presidential Disaster Declaration, which, if granted, would make Public Assistance and Individual Assistance funding available in the designated counties. In order to request a Presidential Disaster Declaration, damages incurred must meet criteria set by the federal government.

“These damage assessments are the next step in our efforts to assist Iowans and communities that were affected by the tornadoes and severe weather on April 9,” said HSEMD Administrator J. Derek Hill.

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division is responsible for the coordination of State disaster response and recovery activities. HSEMD staffed the State Emergency Operations Center from shortly after the tornadoes touched down until all requests for resources were fulfilled several days later. HSEMD staff assisted the City of Mapleton in determining how to best remove the large amounts of debris left by the tornado. HSEMD also worked with the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council to coordinate volunteer management throughout the impacted counties.

“The joint damage assessments will enable us to assess the true financial impact to these communities,” said Hill.

For further information on the disaster assessment process, visit www.iowahomelandsecurity.org.

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