

Disaster News Update –June 16 to 22, 2008

RECENT DISASTER / HAZARD ACTIVITY (Past 7 days)

- **Drought:** Oregon, California, Nevada, Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee
- **Explosion:** South Dakota (home explosion), California (farm explosion), Texas (gas line), North Carolina (home explosion)
- **Extreme Heat:** California, Texas, Arizona, New Mexico
- **Fire:** California, New Mexico, Texas, Virginia, North Carolina
- **Flood/Flash Flood:** Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Oklahoma
- **Hail:** Indiana, Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina
- **HazMat:** Ohio (wastewater treatment chemical leak)
- **Heavy Rain:** Oklahoma, Florida, New Hampshire, Missouri, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Iowa
- **Mudslide:** New Jersey, Arkansas, New York
- **Severe Storms:** New York, New Jersey, Texas, Ohio, Missouri, Pennsylvania
- **Sinkhole:** California, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Montana, Colorado, Idaho, Florida, Minnesota
- **Strong Wind:** Oklahoma, Illinois, Texas
- **Tornado:** Illinois, Georgia

CURRENT FEMA MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATIONS (Past 30 days)

- [Nebraska:](#) Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding (6/20)
- [West Virginia:](#) Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Flooding, Mudslides, and Landslides (6/19)
- [Wisconsin:](#) Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding (6/14)
- [Montana:](#) Severe Winter Storm (6/13)
- [Indiana:](#) Severe Storms and Flooding (6/8)
- [Nebraska:](#) Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding (5/30)
- [Mississippi:](#) Severe Storms and Tornadoes (5/28)
- [Iowa:](#) Severe Storms, Tornadoes, and Flooding (5/27)
- [Colorado:](#) Severe Storms and Tornadoes (5/26)
- [Georgia:](#) Severe Storms and Flooding (5/23)
- [Missouri:](#) Severe Storms and Tornadoes (5/23)
- [South Dakota:](#) Severe Winter Storm and Record and Near Record Snow (5/22)
- [Arkansas:](#) Severe Storms, Flooding, and Tornadoes (5/20)
- [Kentucky:](#) Severe Storms, Tornadoes, Flooding, Mudslides, and Landslides (5/19)
- Fire Declarations: [Texas \(6/16\)](#), [North Carolina \(6/16\)](#), [California \(6/11\)](#), [California 2 \(6/11\)](#), [California \(6/10\)](#), [Oklahoma \(6/5\)](#), [Texas \(6/5\)](#), [Texas \(6/3\)](#), [California \(5/22\)](#)

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM NEWS

Flood Survivors Look to Help Others (Disaster News Network, 6/22)

In a community shattered by heavy flooding twice within the last 10 months, members of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church still want to help others – despite their personal losses. “What can I do?” said Pam Lojewski, as she repeated the refrain from her congregation here Church members are now ready to help put the community back together after this week brought another round of heavy flooding in this rain-swollen southwestern Wisconsin village of about 625 people along the Kickapoo River. Lojewski’s congregation has about 40-50 active members and about half have been affected flooding that took place this week and the flash floods that struck Aug. 19, in which a wall of water roared through the village and damaged the church parsonage. “There is so much unknown now,” she said, “We’ve been living with it for months. It’s really, really scary.” Since the flooding last August, Lojewski said it only takes a heavy rain storm to dredge up the underlying stress suffered in this community since last summer. Personnel from Project Recovery, a Lutheran effort to help congregants deal with this stress, have been to Lojewski’s church.

Mission work central to Ohio Church (N.O. Times Picayune, 6/22)

It is not that Ginghamburg United Methodist Church sits in the middle of a Midwestern cornfield that makes it notable. Nor even that its pastor preaches in jeans and sandals to a working-class congregation sipping coffee in shorts and T-shirts. More to the point: Of the hundreds of American churches, ministries and local faith-based organizations that for nearly three years have poured themselves out on behalf of wounded New Orleans, few have matched the sustained commitment to Hurricane Katrina victims of this megachurch 15 miles north of economically depressed Dayton, Ohio. Over two and a half years, Ginghamburg has sent 41 teams of volunteers to help rebuild the New Orleans area. They are still coming. Five teams have come so far in 2008; six more are booked for later this year. The end is not in sight. “We’ll keep coming until people tell us to stop,” said Craig Maxwell, Ginghamburg’s director of global missions. “And we’ll keep promoting it, to make sure people know the need is still there. “It’s still our most-attended trip.” The Ohio volunteers come out of a faith community so ferociously committed to aiding the poor, whether in Dayton or Darfur, that its pastor, the Rev. Mike Slaughter -- he of the jeans and sandals -- regularly admonishes his congregation: “You get no points for coming to church on Sunday.”

Salvation Army solicits for flood relief (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 6/21)

With several hundred employees and volunteers providing flood relief in 30 Wisconsin counties, the Salvation Army began a mass mailing soliciting funds from past donors for that effort, said Major Robert Thomson, division commander. Earlier this week, a telethon raised more than \$100,000 for the effort. How much the Salvation Army - which is both a church and a charity - can do will depend on donations, but the needs total hundreds of thousands of dollars, said Tom Thuecks, division disaster services coordinator. The organization's mobile units mainly have provided food and beverages at shelters for people displaced from homes, and also for disaster response workers. Its people also have distributed flood cleanup kits and provided emotional and spiritual care by talking to victims. The longer-term plan is to fill in the gaps after victims register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, check with their own insurers, and dial 211

to seek local assistance programs. "We're focusing primarily on the elderly and handicapped who have no other family, no other way of getting this cleaned up," Thuecks said, adding that assistance could range from cleaning basements to - depending on funds - providing new water heaters.

Katrina workers answer the call to Iowa (Times Picayune, 6/21)

When Heather Hilliard was asked whether she could go to Iowa to help victims of the floods, she had just one question: "Where can I get tennis shoes?" she asked. After obtaining the proper footwear, Hilliard, the chief administrative officer of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana, was on her way to Cedar Rapids. Hilliard's food bank is just one of the various local organizations that have quickly mobilized volunteers to flooded areas of the Midwest, offering help in a situation that stirs memories and parallels the devastation wrought by Katrina in 2005. Local organizations such as Second Harvest, the Archdiocese of New Orleans/Catholic Charities and the Red Cross have been quick to offer help, from food distribution to disaster relief programming. Hilliard, who heads disaster relief and response on a national incident team for Second Harvest, distributed food in Iowa before returning to New Orleans Wednesday. With fewer than 15 people on the staff, the Northeast Iowa chapter of Second Harvest Food Bank needed multiple volunteers to deliver food to community sites such as high schools and churches, she said. Some members of the Southeast Louisiana chapter of the Red Cross are also helping with food distribution. Three volunteers are helping in six affected states, working in kitchens and mobile feeding vehicles, while a fourth volunteer is working with client casework, said Bill Salmeron, emergency services director for the chapter. Another volunteer from New Orleans is using lessons learned from Katrina to help Iowans develop disaster response programs. Colleen D'Aquin, director of emergency management at the Archdiocese of New Orleans/Catholic Charities, is helping archdioceses in Iowa find volunteer disaster coordinators to head up response teams.

Red Cross Disaster Fund Depleted (Washington Post, 6/17)

The American Red Cross said yesterday that it has depleted its national disaster relief fund and is taking out loans to pay for shelters, food and other relief services across seven Midwestern states battered by floods. Officials at the charity estimated that efforts in the Midwest will cost more than \$15 million and warned that the total could surpass \$40 million if the Mississippi River creates floods in St. Louis later this week. On the cusp of hurricane season, Red Cross executives said the charity has raised just \$3.2 million for the Midwest floods and painted a dire picture of its overall disaster relief finances. They said many donors are giving less because of rising gasoline and food prices and the collapse of the housing market. Also, the absence of a major U.S. catastrophe since Hurricane Katrina in 2005 has made it difficult to galvanize donors. "The disaster relief fund today is completely depleted. The balance is zero," Jeffrey Towers, chief development officer, said in a conference call with reporters. The Red Cross is congressionally chartered to provide disaster relief but operates largely on private donations. The depleted fund is a general reserve that is tapped whenever disasters strike. The financial situation does not affect employee salaries or the charity's blood-collecting operations but could inhibit its ability to assist in disasters.

COMMUNITY PROGRAM NEWS

Cedar Rapids Businesses start disaster recovery group (Cedar Rapids Gazette, 6/17)

Small businesses outside downtown Cedar Rapids are organizing a disaster recovery support network to ensure they aren't bypassed in disaster recovery efforts. Don Karr of Affordable Plumbing and Remodeling invited businesses to a meeting Monday because of his concerns that businesses outside the Downtown District would not get as much attention from local officials. The group registered businesses on Tuesday at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and a meeting on Thursday shared information about applying for disaster assistance and qualifying as a vendor for FEMA.

RESPONSE AND RECOVERY NEWS

Flood Fight Moves South into Missouri (Disaster News Network, 6/22)

Volunteers spent the weekend feeding and sheltering displaced residents and aid workers as the Mississippi River swells and floods farms and homes in Missouri. "I think everybody's pitching in by trying to be neighborly and helping anyway they can," said Darrell Jones, who lives in Hannibal, Mark Twain's hometown in northern Missouri where the river is expected to crest at around 29 feet over the weekend. A few levee breaks north of town that relieved the river's swelling and the fact that his home is on higher ground and far enough inland made it unlikely he would suffer any flooding, he said. "It would have been a lot higher but there been some levee breaches that have spread it out and delayed it," Jones said. "I'm very fortunate." Others haven't been. Five shelters were housing some 43 people on Saturday, said Susie Stonner, a spokeswoman with the state's Emergency Management Agency. "We don't know how many people have been evacuated," she said. "Most people go to family or friends before they go to a shelter." Tom Dugger, executive director of the Northeast Missouri Chapter of the American Red Cross, said five of the seven counties his agency serves – Lewis, Clark, Marion, Ralls and Pike -- have been impacted by flooding. The Red Cross has helped care for displaced residents and aid workers at the shelters, which have averaged 20 residents each in recent days, he said. The effort has been helped by donated food from grocery stores and cooks and other volunteers from groups such as The Salvation Army and ministries of the Missouri Baptist Convention, Dugger said.

Picher (OK) residents await cleanup, prepare to move on (Associated Press, 6/22)

Propped up on a pile of debris that used to be a home, a door contains a painted message: "NOT DONE." Six weeks after a massive tornado struck this fading lead and zinc mining town, that sentiment meant to let authorities know that the home's owner hadn't yet finished sorting through the pile also describes the fledgling efforts to clean up the town after the disaster. That process has been complicated somewhat by Picher's location within a federal Superfund site and the ongoing process of a federal buyout of homes, including some of the 206 in the town destroyed by the EF-4 twister. The storm packed winds estimated at 165 to 175 mph and caused the deaths of seven people. While those

who had private insurance theoretically could rebuild their homes, it's not likely many will choose that option, and those without insurance have no choice but to relocate. Those left to run the city also face the question of how to pay for the town's share of the cleanup costs and what to do with all the debris once cleanup efforts begin in earnest. Picher "won't ever come back," said 43-year-old Jeff Reeves, who has lived in Picher his entire life and now serves as its fire chief, as did his father and grandfather. "As much as I hate to say it, it's done."

FEMA to pay 1 month of rent for WI flooded homeowners (Associated Press, 6/22)
Wisconsin residents applying for federal disaster relief could qualify for one month's free rent if federal inspectors aren't able to reach their homes. Usually a home has to be inspected by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to receive disaster aid. But some residents' homes remain inaccessible due to standing floodwaters. Inspectors who can't reach a home will record the occupant's name and address. Then FEMA's Temporary Housing Program will forward a check to the applicant. Heavy storms earlier this month caused widespread flooding across southern Wisconsin. Twenty-two counties have been declared federal disaster areas. Early estimates suggest the damage topped \$470 million. As of Saturday, FEMA had paid out \$1 million in disaster aid.

Severe storms cause flash-flooding in Muskogee (Associated Press, 6/21)
Strong winds from hit-and-miss thunderstorms tore the roof off a Muskogee County barn, while torrential rain flooded roads and homes in Muskogee and lightning sparked fires, authorities said. Twenty-five to 30 homes were swamped with water during a flash flood early Friday, Muskogee Emergency Management Director Jimmy Moore said. Public Works Director Mike Stewart said he received 60 complaints about high-water signs, washed-out driveways and water in homes. "There was major road flooding everywhere, specifically on the east side of town," Stewart said. The National Weather Service only reported 1.10 inches between midnight and 9 a.m. at David Field Airport in the city, but the ground was already saturated from several days of rainfall. Meanwhile, fire broke out in the Muskogee County Emergency Management Office in the basement of the county courthouse. Acting Assistant Fire Chief Roger Carter said the building's generator kicked in when the power went out downtown, causing a surge of electricity through a power strip.

Flooding continues to devastate towns along Mississippi (Chattanooga Times, 6/21)
Flooding continued to rip apart small towns along the Mississippi River Friday. As urban areas were spared -- the flood highs in St. Louis were some 10 feet below expected near-record levels -- little communities took a bashing. Some were protected by levees that were simply not designed to hold back such high waters and couldn't resist the river. Others had no protection at all and saw the Mississippi surge into their properties. Here in Lincoln County, where three levees were overrun on Thursday and one on Friday, others were barely holding, with officials predicting three more levees could falter by the weekend. Some 300 people were evacuated in this river region north of St. Louis as residents watched flood waters surge higher and higher. Overnight rains made the misery worse and more storms were expected this weekend. But they are not expected to add a significant amount of water to the already swollen river. John Young thought he made the

real estate deal of his life in 1993 when he bought a flood-damaged, three-bedroom house in this Mississippi River town for just \$3,000. Like his neighbors, Young found the bargain because he figured the river would not in hundreds of years ever flood so badly again. But as Young watched the raging river march into his backyard Friday, he couldn't quite believe how his luck had changed. "They told us in 1993 that was a 500-year-flood," Young said, unable to contain his bitterness. "Well, it's only 15 years later, and here we are again." Young and his neighbors in Lincoln County have joined an unhappy fraternity of flood victims who hate the way their lives are repeating themselves. With at least 25 levees breaking in recent days along either side of the river in Illinois, Iowa and Missouri, the flood of 2008 continues to threaten further havoc despite government forecasts that show the risk of more flooding is dropping.

Cedar Rapids, Iowa, begins recovery as floodwaters move on (Chicago Tribune, 6/21)

Marc Holley was among the last residents allowed to return home to Cedar Rapids, Iowa's hardest hit neighborhood, where flooding reached roofs. The water ruined everything on his first floor, rearranging furniture and leaving behind mud, mold and a thick stench. "The smell is almost like a rotting corpse. It's been festering for more than a week," he said Friday. "I almost wish it had been a tornado instead, so we could sift through everything and just start over." Many of his neighbors agreed their homes would never be the same. The most widespread damage from flooding across the Midwest this month occurred in this eastern Iowa city. At least 10,000 people were evacuated in low-lying areas, and city officials prevented many of them from going home until now because of safety concerns. Thousands of stunned families have returned over the past few days to scenes reminiscent of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. The neighborhoods were empty and quiet, huge slices of the city remained without power, and National Guard troops enforced a nighttime curfew to maintain order. Little looting was reported, but the downtown streets looked ransacked, as if some giant drawer had been upended, its contents shaken out and then dragged through the mud. Out-of-state disaster response trucks arrived to clean flooded hotels, banks and city buildings there. Meanwhile, service centers opened to lead residents through the maze of applying for aid with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Shelters provided thousands of free meals, and residents looked for rental housing.

River Rises Again in MO, IL (Yahoo News, 6/21)

Amid the battle to hold back the swollen Mississippi River, some towns in northeastern Missouri and Illinois got an unwelcome surprise Saturday as river levels rose higher than projected. Recent levee breaks north of Canton, not far from the Iowa line, had allowed the river level to drop there and at other towns far north of St. Louis. Officials knew the water would rise again to crests expected during the weekend, and while the amount of the increase caught them off guard, it didn't make things any worse. The folks in Canton were keeping a tight watch over the city's levee, but it continued to hold strong against the Mississippi. The river reached 26.3 feet Saturday morning at Canton after dipping below 23 feet two days earlier, and it was expected to crest later in the day at 26.4 feet. That's still more than a foot lower than the record set during the Great Flood of '93, and 3 feet below the top of the city's levee. The new Saturday morning reading was "a full foot higher than we expected it to be," said Canton emergency management spokeswoman

Monica Heaton. "The levee's fine, but the river did another unexpected thing last night." Forecasters said Saturday afternoon that the river would crest several inches higher than expected in Hannibal and at Quincy, Ill., where it was set to crest late in the day more than 2 feet below the '93 flood peak.

CA Firefighters Wrestle Dozens of Blazes (Associated Press, 6/21)

Thunderstorms sparked as many as 75 wildfires in a wilderness area in far Northern California on Saturday as officials farther south got close to containing a blaze that destroyed several homes and forced thousands to evacuate. Storms overnight Friday were responsible for the large number of fires in Shasta-Trinity National Forest, near Redding. Those fires range in size from less than an acre to more than 750 acres. None immediately threatened homes, said Forest Service spokesman Michael Odle. Teams moved in Saturday on the two largest fires. South of San Francisco, a fire that burned homes and closed a stretch of highway was 90 percent contained and could be surrounded by the end of the day, said officials of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. It had charred 630 acres, or less than a square mile. "We made some good progress over the evening and hope to have the same today," said department spokesman Paul Van Gerwen, a battalion chief. However, evacuation orders remained in place Saturday for the roughly 2,000 people who fled their homes Friday. Some evacuees spent the night at an emergency shelter set up at a local school. About 650 firefighters were working in hot, dry weather to contain the blaze, which destroyed as many as 15 buildings, including several homes, and closed scenic Highway 1 in Santa Cruz County for hours, fire officials said.

President Declares Major Disaster for Nebraska (FEMA, 6/20)

FEMA announced that federal disaster aid has been made available for Nebraska to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, tornadoes and flooding during the period of May 22, 2008. FEMA Administrator David Paulison said the President's action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in the counties of Buffalo, Butler, Colfax, Dawson, Douglas, Gage, Hamilton, Jefferson, Kearney, Platte, Richardson, Sarpy, and Saunders. Paulison said that FEMA assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster. Federal funding is also available to state and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by severe storms, tornadoes and flooding in the counties of Adams, Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Buffalo, Burt, Butler, Cass, Chase, Colfax, Cuming, Custer, Dawson, Douglas, Fillmore, Frontier, Furnas, Gage, Garfield, Gosper, Hall, Hamilton, Hayes, Holt, Howard, Jefferson, Keya Paha, Lancaster, Lincoln, Logan, Loup, Merrick, McPherson, Nance, Otoe, Phelps, Platte, Polk, Red Willow, Richardson, Rock, Saline, Saunders, Sarpy, Seward, Sherman, Stanton, Thayer, Thomas, Thurston, Webster, and York. Funding is available on a cost sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide to prevent or reduce long term risk to life and property from natural hazards. All counties in the State of Nebraska are eligible to apply for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Paulison named Willie G. Nunn as the federal coordinating officer for federal

recovery operations in the affected area. Nunn said additional designations may be made at a later date if requested by the state and warranted by the results of further damage assessments.

President Declares Major Disaster For West Virginia (FEMA, 6/19)

FEMA announced that federal disaster aid has been made available for the state of West Virginia to help people and communities recover from the effects of severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, mudslides, and landslides during the period of June 3-7, 2008. FEMA Director David Paulison said the assistance was authorized under a major disaster declaration issued for the state by the President. The President's action makes federal funding available to affected individuals in Barbour, Doddridge, Gilmer, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson, Marion, Taylor, and Tyler counties. The assistance, to be coordinated by FEMA, can include grants to help pay for temporary housing, home repairs and other serious disaster-related expenses. Low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration also will be available to cover residential and business losses not fully compensated by insurance. Federal funding also is available to State and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe storms, tornadoes, flooding, mudslides, and landslides in the counties of Barbour, Clay, Doddridge, Gilmer, Harrison, Marion, and Taylor. In addition, federal funding is available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide. Paulison named Ed Smith as the federal coordinating officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area. Smith said that damage surveys are continuing in other areas, and more counties and additional forms of assistance may be designated after the assessments are complete.

Most Flood Victims Don't Have Flood Insurance (Chicago Tribune, 6/19)

Floodwaters that raged through Cedar Rapids tore the sun room off the back of Joseph and Dawn Zamastil's two-story house, engulfed the first floor, and turned the basement into a pool of fetid standing water. In an odd way, though, Dawn Zamastil feels almost lucky. After the record Midwestern floods of 1993 left their Czech Village neighborhood untouched, the Zamastils had tried _ unsuccessfully _ to stop buying flood insurance. But the bank that held the mortgage to their home had other ideas. "We said, '93, we got no water. But the bank said no, we were in the flood plain, so we still needed it," said Dawn Zamastil. Did they ever. The Zamastils now stand to collect on the \$115,000 flood-insurance policy on their home of 30 years. The Zamastils are in the minority. Nationwide, only 17 percent of people carry any flood insurance on their home. And in Cedar Rapids, less than 20 percent of the 35,000 homeowners evacuated due to this week's record floods are believed to have insurance _ even though all but a handful lived in a federally mandated flood zone. Surviving a flood is challenging enough. As flood victims begin dealing with the aftermath, from clean-up to rebuilding, many now are wading through the complexities of financial recovery that can be as perplexing, confusing, arbitrary and even unpredictable as the floodwaters themselves. People who own their homes outright often do without flood insurance. Banks can be lax in enforcing requirements that homes in flood plains be protected by flood insurance. Even those who do buy flood insurance often are shocked to find their policies do not cover the loss of

their televisions, couches, carpets and other household items. Businesses owners, meanwhile, often find their insurance agents steer them away from flood policies because of the expense. For many property owners, living without flood insurance is a calculated risk.

Flooded WI village looks at relocating vs. salvaging (Daily Reporter (WI), 6/19)

The flooded village of Gays Mills will wait a little longer before making a call on its next move. Village President Larry McCarn said mixed feelings were apparent at a packed public meeting Tuesday night that was attended by representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Commerce and U.S. Representative Ron Kind, D-Wis. "It gave people a chance to vent," McCarn said. "But we're still going to work to see what's the best option." Over the next week, residents will fill out a survey that will determine whether the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers performs a feasibility study to determine if the village can be salvaged and braced for future storms or if it should relocate within village limits, but out of the flood-plain. McCarn said if the feasibility study is requested, it would be done within a matter of weeks. "We don't know when the next storm will hit," he said. "If what we've experienced twice in the last year is a 500-year storm, then I've really aged in the last 10 months." McCarn said he would prefer to see the village relocate, but the decision lies in residents' hands. Senator Dan Kapanke, R-La Crosse, who also attended the meeting Tuesday, said he would support whatever decision the community makes, provided a change is made. "I think it's clear that the status quo is not acceptable anymore," he said. "There was talk about moving, but there was also talk about building a levy or a dike. There are a lot of unanswered questions right now, but something has to be done. "The water's going to come again. "

Gov. Granholm Declares Emergency in Several MI Counties (States News, 6/19)

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today declared a state of emergency in Lake, Manistee, Osceola, Ottawa and Wexford counties. The declarations were requested by local officials and ensure that direct state resources will be made available to address immediate threats to public health and safety related to recent severe weather. "These emergency declarations are part of our on-going effort to assist local emergency personnel," Granholm said. "Together we are committed to protecting Michigan citizens." Governor Granholm's emergency declarations authorize the Michigan State Police (MSP), Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division to coordinate all state efforts in preserving and acquiring state resources to assist with immediate threats to public health and safety related to the severe weather that began June 6. Executive Orders 2008-12 through 2008-16 will allow resources from all state departments to be deployed in local response efforts. Such resources include, but are not limited to personnel, supplies, equipment, materials, or facilities from all state departments. State resources will specifically be made available to assist with damaged bridges, culverts, roadways and plugged drains.

Federal Response to Midwest Floods Continues, Shifts (FEMA, 6/18)

FEMA continues to coordinate the federal response to support states impacted by flooding in the Midwest. FEMA's focus remains on disaster operations in states where

river levels remain high and flooding continues. As waters recede in the impacted states, the federal agency's focus shifts to the safe return of residents to their homes, the reestablishment of critical infrastructure, the removal of debris and hazardous materials, and a review of housing available to meet temporary housing needs. Below is an update of the support provided and the actions taken by FEMA and its federal partners as of June 18, 2008, in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin and Missouri. Joint Federal Activities: FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the U.S. General Services Administration and the Defense Logistics Agency have worked together to provide

- 3,222,000 liters of water - enough to provide for more than 465,000 / day.
- 213,120 meals ready-to-eat (MRE's).
- 12.8 million sand-bags.
- 46 generators.
- 2,500 tarps.
- 4,032 rolls of plastic sheeting.
- 23 Mobile Disaster Recovery Centers (MDRCs).
- 30 trucks deployed to help with debris removal.
- Another 108,000 liters of water, 50 generators and 7 MDRCs are currently on the way to impacted communities.

Flood Recovery Likely to Be Slow (Washington Post, 6/17)

Floodwaters have quickly receded, down from last week's high of 15 feet above flood stage. But as they retreated Monday, it became increasingly evident that it will be a slow, painful recovery for this city of 120,000. Over the weekend, city officials had let some people back into homes and downtown businesses to retrieve important possessions and files. But after several accidents attributed to flood damage, city officials suspended the reentry program until every building can be inspected by "strike teams" including fire, police, health and energy officials. "There are incredibly hazardous things going on," said Lt. Col. Greg Hapgood, spokesman for the Iowa National Guard. "Live power lines, gas leaks, petroleum, chemicals. We are working feverishly so people can get into their homes, reclaim some goods and then get out, but we have 3,900 homes to inspect." The delays in letting people back into their homes is spawning anger and frustration in many quarters. "I'm moving back to Chicago," April Carter Pauls said with a scowl. She was brimming with frustration after a tense encounter with National Guardsmen who would not let her and her mother into their home in the working-class Czech Village neighborhood to retrieve their two cats. More than 1,000 city blocks are still barricaded by some of the 750 National Guardsmen in the city. Though the Cedar River has dropped seven feet since Friday, many houses and government buildings still stand in floodwaters that include agricultural chemicals and raw sewage from the overwhelmed wastewater treatment plant.

Flooding takes toll on disaster workers, too (Cedar Rapids Gazette, 6/16)

Heroes get tired, too. Sometimes, the helpers need help. Firefighters are on 48-hour shifts. Red Cross workers have gone days with minimal sleep. There is exhaustion. There is stress. But there is work to be done. "(Friday night) was the first time I went to bed in four days. I got five hours of sleep," said Peter Teahen, a local funeral director and American Red Cross national spokesman. Teahen was back at work Saturday morning.

When reached by The Gazette, he was setting up water distribution sites at Westdale Mall and Sam's Club. Rich Mahaney, director of the Linn County Emergency Management Agency, is coordinating flood relief in the county. "It's obviously a really, really busy time," said Mahaney, who added that he has taken "literally thousands" of phone calls in the past week. "Everyone involved is working in shifts, whether it's six, eight, 12 hours, whatever. But this is a 24/7 operation, and it will be for quite a while." Firefighters' shifts are longer. "They're going on 48-hour shifts ... then they're off for 24 hours. They get to go home and recover a little bit," said Dave Koch, Cedar Rapids Fire Department spokesman. "We can't do our jobs adequately if we're so drained and don't have the energy to make good decisions. I think all of the people who are in charge are really keeping a close eye because they know how hard it can be." Hard enough that the Red Cross has brought in mental health teams and stress management teams. They'll be here for the victims. And they'll be here for the workers. With five full-time staff members, Linn County has the largest county emergency management agency in the state. It is supplying workers with food, water and other beverages.

Two More Counties Added to Indiana Disaster Declaration (FEMA, 6/16)

Decatur and Wayne counties were added today to the federal disaster declared on June 8, according to officials from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Residents of these counties are now eligible to apply for federal disaster assistance. Today's announcement takes the total number of Indiana counties designated for Individual Assistance (IA) to 28. Other counties previously designated as eligible for Individual Assistance (IA) are: Adams, Bartholomew, Brown, Clay, Daviess, Dearborn, Greene, Hamilton, Hancock, Henry, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson, Knox, Marion, Monroe, Morgan, Owen, Parke, Putnam, Randolph, Rush, Shelby, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo counties. This will help eligible individuals and business owners recover from the effects of severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that occurred during a period beginning May 30 and continuing. Additional counties and types of available assistance may be added following continuing damage assessments.

Six more Iowa Counties Approved for Individual Assistance (FEMA, 6/16)

FEMA announced that the hours that Iowans affected by severe storms, tornadoes and flooding may register by phone for federal disaster assistance have been extended. As of June 16, 24 counties have been included in the federal disaster declaration for Individual Assistance, including Cedar, Jones, Louisa, Muscatine, Polk and Winneshiek counties which were added on June 15. Other counties approved for individual assistance are Adams, Benton, Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Cerro Gordo, Delaware, Fayette, Floyd, Hardin, Johnson, Linn, Marion, Page, Story, Tama, and Union.

36,000 Iowans homeless as floodwaters begin to recede (USA Today, 6/16)

Marie Welton figures her daughter will have to bulldoze her flooded home here. She worries about the survival of her own business, a children's hair salon, as people recover from epic flooding that put 1,000 blocks underwater. "They say we're going to be resilient. They say we'll overcome this," Welton, 52, said Sunday, but Iowans' can-do spirit "is going to keep going down before it comes up." Floodwaters began to recede

Sunday in Iowa's two largest cities, Des Moines and Cedar Rapids, and the Iowa River crested in Iowa City after swamping part of the University of Iowa, but many communities face daunting cleanup and recovery efforts as the waters still threaten communities elsewhere in the region. Downstream Iowa communities such as Wapello, Burlington and Keokuk are braced for record flooding. Davenport put out an urgent call Sunday for volunteers to fill sandbags to reinforce two levees. The National Weather Service predicts record flooding on the Mississippi River on Wednesday and Thursday at Canton, Hannibal and Louisiana, Mo., and Quincy, Ill. Authorities in Canton and Alexandria, Mo., called for voluntary evacuations Sunday. Workers rushed to add 3 feet of sandbags to Canton's 27.5-foot levee.

PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION NEWS

Drill tests W.Va.'s readiness to host evacuees (Associated Press, 6/18)

Emergency officials are testing West Virginia's ability to host thousands of potential East Coast evacuees. Officials in 25 counties are participating in the two-day drill that's designed to test the state's ability to receive, help and send evacuees on their way to safer locations. The effort is part of a national preparedness drill and is to end Wednesday. State Homeland Security spokesman Joe Thornton says the drill will help identify gaps in West Virginia's emergency response plans. Military Affairs and Public Safety Secretary James Spears has said the state has to be ready if a disaster hits the nation's capital or East Coast population centers. Thornton says officials from Maryland, Ohio and Virginia are observing West Virginia's drill.

Hurricane models try to pin down the surge (Houston Chronicle, 6/16)

When it comes to hurricanes, miles matter. Imagine a Category 3 hurricane striking the western end of Bolivar Peninsula. The storm surge would raise water levels by 6 feet in Galveston Bay and along Galveston Island, according to computer models. Now, imagine the same storm striking a mere 20 miles down the coast, just past the Galveston seawall. The surge would push as much as 17 feet of water into Galveston Bay and 13 feet along much of Galveston Island, clipping it from behind even if the seawall buttressed the initial waves. The two landfall scenarios just 20 miles apart would mean the difference between excellent surfing conditions in Galveston and monstrous, fatal waves of water. In an ideal world, such storm surge projections would allow public officials to call hurricane evacuations for narrow slices of the coastline rather than a wide swath of Southeast Texas. But evacuation managers live in the real, maddening world in which nature still cannot be forecast with enough precision to really matter.

GULF COAST RECOVERY NEWS

1st Truckload of Recovered FEMA Supplies Delivered to LA (States News, 6/20)

A truckload of essential household supplies discarded by FEMA despite immense need for the goods along the Gulf Coast was today delivered to a Louisiana non-profit organization for distribution to families in need. The supplies, given to Louisiana by the

State of Texas, had been among \$85 million in materials meant for Katrina and Rita hurricane survivors that were given away to other states and government agencies after sitting in a FEMA warehouse for two years. "Today should be a lesson for FEMA, and a strong reminder to everyone in government," said United States Senator Mary L. Landrieu, who had written letters to DHS Secretary Chertoff and other federal agency officials seeking the return of any unused household goods from the FEMA distribution. "When committed leaders stand up and work together, anything is possible. I thank the Texas leaders who stepped up to help set this right, and commend Paul Rainwater and the Louisiana Recovery Authority for working so swiftly to reform our own state's processes to make sure these goods get where they belong efficiently and effectively." "When we learned of these lost FEMA supplies, we were told that even though our needs are great, we couldn't get the supplies back," said Paul Rainwater, Executive Director of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA). "What a difference a week makes. Working together, we brought these household goods back to the people of Louisiana and we will continue to fight to help our citizens re-establish their homes."

New Orleans to phase out trailers by August (Associated Press, 6/16)

Residents and housing advocates on Monday ripped into a city plan to get rid of federally issued trailers, citing confusion and a lack of affordable, alternate housing nearly three years after Hurricane Katrina. City officials say they will enforce the plan, though some trailers may remain after the August deadline on a case-by-case basis. Mayor Ray Nagin has said he wants all trailers supplied by the Federal Emergency Management Agency gone by Aug. 29, Katrina's third anniversary. He has cited the potential danger of the chemical formaldehyde in trailers, as well as fears over vulnerability of the trailers to hurricane-force winds. As of Friday, nearly 4,640 FEMA trailers remained in the city, most in front of hurricane-damaged homes. That compares with 9,545 last November, when FEMA began pushing to close the trailer parks it managed. FEMA said all trailer parks are now closed. City officials say they are going trailer-to-trailer to listen to residents' needs and talk about the plan to begin enforcement July 1. At that time, people still in trailers could face a citation and administrative hearing if they haven't received an extension. A handful of housing advocates and residents told council members Monday during a committee meeting that they shouldn't force deadlines on hurricane victims struggling with high rents and limited social services. Laura Tuggle, a lawyer with New Orleans Legal Assistance, which works with the city's poor, said she would be "terrified" if she had to abandon a trailer in front of a partly rebuilt home. Thieves could harvest copper pipes or other materials, she said. Steve Donahue, a resident who is wheelchair-bound, said he's still waiting on aid to help repair his hurricane-damaged house.