

Gov. Rauner Declares Christian County Disaster Area

Declaration enables access to state emergency and recovery services

SPRINGFIELD – Gov. Bruce Rauner today declared Christian County a state disaster area after severe storms and tornadoes ripped across Illinois. More than 20 people were injured in the storm and hundreds of structures were damaged or destroyed.

“After seeing the destruction first-hand, we are extremely fortunate that no lives were lost in this storm,” Rauner said. “Our hearts and thoughts go out to those impacted. The State is providing resources and necessary personnel to the affected area. We will continue to assist in the days, weeks and months ahead as those families recover and heal.”

The state disaster declaration makes available a wide variety of state resources that can help affected communities respond and recover from the storms. The state of Illinois has mobilized personnel and assets to help local government officials with disaster recovery.

To date, more than 300 customers remain without power in freezing temperatures. Ameren Illinois reports approximately 100 power poles need to be replaced in the Taylorville area alone. Currently, all state roads are open. Local governments are conducting damage assessment around the hardest hit communities.

Governor Rauner activated the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Springfield Saturday evening to support local governments as they assess damage caused by the long line of severe storms and tornadoes that moved through the state. The SEOC received initial reports of storm damage from several parts of the state and has been working closely with local emergency management officials since then to determine the extent of the damage and what state assistance is needed.

In addition to operating the SEOC and directing resources to communities requesting assistance, IEMA also sent liaisons to local Emergency Operations Centers to coordinate assistance requests. State assistance to date includes Illinois Department of Transportation equipment to help burn debris and Illinois Emergency Management Agency equipment and personnel.