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Wisconsin Granted Federal Disaster Declaration Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

MADISON – Gov. Tony Evers today announced that Wisconsin has been granted a major disaster declaration for the entire state of Wisconsin, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The declaration provides access to Public Assistance programs for all 72 Wisconsin counties and the state’s federally recognized tribes.

“I am grateful for the swift action of the federal government in reviewing our request for a major disaster declaration,” Gov. Evers said. “The assistance granted today will help ensure Wisconsin can gain access to critical assistance as we continue our work to respond to this pandemic.”

Gov. Evers earlier this week requested that the federal government provide the following programs to support the state’s response: Public Assistance, Direct Assistance, Hazard Mitigation (statewide), and certain Individual Assistance programs; Crisis Counseling, Community Disaster Loans and the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Program.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) notified the state today that it is granting the request for Public Assistance to help provide reimbursement for emergency protective measures taken by state and local governments in their response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The declaration also authorizes direct Federal Assistance which means when the State and local governments lack the capability to perform or to contract for eligible emergency work and/or debris removal, the State may request that the work be accomplished by a federal agency. The governor’s additional requests for assistance remain under review.

“The state will work with communities across Wisconsin to ensure federal disaster assistance is received as quickly as possible,” said Dr. Darrell L. Williams, Wisconsin Emergency Management administrator. “We are thankful that our partners at FEMA helped to get a quick response to this request, so we can ensure critical assistance programs are available to communities that are in need.”

The major disaster declaration covers assistance to public entities, and will cover eligible projects submitted by counties, cities, townships, tribes, and certain private, not-for-profit organizations. Local governments in the declared counties are now eligible for federal assistance and should contact county emergency management directors for further information. Under the program, FEMA provides 75 percent of eligible costs, while the remaining 25 percent is the responsibility of state and local agencies.

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