



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

September 30, 2021

Mr. Greg Engle
Acting Administrator
Division of Wisconsin Emergency Management
2400 Wright Street
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Administrator Engle:

It has been 1,128 days since flooding devastated many communities in the 17th Senate District and 50th Assembly District in August 2018. While many of these communities have received their reimbursements, there are a handful that are still waiting.

One specific community is the Town of Seven Mile Creek in Juneau County (PA-05-WI-4402-PW-00775). The town submitted the final piece of paperwork in May 2021. Since that time, the project has been in final review – nearly five months.

While we understand that the process naturally takes some time, Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) has not been able to even provide a timeline on when the town can expect payment (\$37,153.25). In fact, in an email dated July 29, 2021 WEM staff stated, *“We cannot provide a timeline on when we will complete the state review”* and follow up requests have not yielded additional information.

This lack of detail and an estimated timeline is unacceptable. Our constituents are waiting in bureaucratic purgatory.

Please provide us with a timeline for when the Town of Seven Mile Creek will receive its reimbursement and work quickly to resolve this issue.

In addition, we are concerned about the lack of proactive outreach by WEM when it comes to helping our communities receive reimbursement.

Since the flooding, our offices have had nearly 100 phone calls with local government officials, many of whom were confused and deflated by the process. We know that other issues can pop up along the way, such as construction delays, but many had trouble navigating the complex process. Some communities were only missing a signature or final photograph before getting paid. Some received the federal reimbursement, but not the state portion. The delays have caused significant headaches for many of our communities looking for answers and wanting to move forward.

For many of these communities, WEM did not follow-up with a simple phone call or email until our offices started asking questions. While many local officials were complimentary of WEM staff, they were frustrated by the lack of proactive outreach.

Legislative offices should not have to get involved for our communities to get paid. While we have been happy to act as the middleman, it should not have to come to that. Communities should not have to make additional phone calls to our offices for WEM to do its job.

Part of WEM's mission is "Recovery" with a stated goal to "restore the affected area to its previous state". To fulfill this goal, shouldn't WEM be proactive in helping our communities receive their disaster reimbursements as quickly as possible?

We implore you to fulfill this charge.

Sincerely,



Howard Marklein
17th Senate District



Tony Kurtz
50th Assembly District