



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

August 20, 2024

The Honorable Joseph Biden  
The President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Ms. Lori A. Ehrlich, Regional Administrator  
FEMA Region 1  
Volpe Center  
220 Binney Street  
Cambridge, MA 02142

Dear President Biden:

Under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. sections 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR Section 206.35, I request that you declare an emergency for Fairfield County, New Haven County, and Litchfield County in the State of Connecticut as a result of extreme flooding following historic rainfall.

On August 18, 2024, a rainstorm approached the State of Connecticut, and quickly intensified unexpectedly. Flash Flood warnings were originally issued at noon until 1:30PM for Fairfield and New Haven counties by the National Weather Service (NWS), estimating the rainfall between 1 to 2 inches per hour. Litchfield County was issued a Flash Flood warning at 3:40PM until 8:00PM. The Flash Flood Warnings for Fairfield and New Haven counties were extended until 12:15AM on August 19<sup>th</sup>. At 10:00PM the estimated rainfall had been between 2-6 inches of rain with an additional .5 to 1 inch expected.

Unfortunately, reality did not match the forecasts. Up to almost 16 inches of rain fell in 6-8 hours in some locations. Once the data was collected, it was determined that the rainfall was significant enough to qualify as a 1,000-year flood in some areas, and 50, 100, 200, and 500 year flood in other areas. Instead of the 1-2 inches that were estimated, the peak rainfall exceeded 3 inches of water per hour, and 7 inches in three hours in a band from the Town of Monroe to the Town of Oxford both located in Connecticut. The return frequency for this rainfall was greater than 1,000 years. Connecticut also experienced major river flooding to include the Housatonic, Little River, and Naugatuck rivers. We are only now identifying the severity of the storm and its effects.

210 CAPITOL AVENUE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106  
860-566-4840 • [Governor.Lamont@ct.gov](mailto:Governor.Lamont@ct.gov)  
[www.governor.ct.gov](http://www.governor.ct.gov) • [@GovNedLamont](https://www.instagram.com/GovNedLamont)

Between 1PM-6PM on August 18<sup>th</sup>, multiple life safety issues were being reported in Litchfield County, with ultimately 2 fatalities in the Town of Oxford. There were also reports for assistance to evacuate approximately 50 campers from Kettletown State Park campground. Over 30 additional evacuations occurred at Jackson Cove near Zoar Lake due to the rapidity of the rising water. In Litchfield County at least 4 towns declared local emergencies due to severe flooding and evacuations. Landslides have occurred in numerous locations including in the City of Danbury, which severed a gas main forcing 10 units of a condominium project to be evacuated. Another senior housing apartment complex was severely flooded and compromised requiring 40-50 people being evacuated and requiring housing. In the Town of Oxford, the Fire Department and State Police worked with local and state Urban Search and Rescue teams to assist with evacuating residents along the Housatonic River. These are some key examples amid the huge requests of private citizens calling due to their homes flooding, businesses being destroyed, and bridges and local roads being washed away affecting evacuations and rescue responses.

In Fairfield County multiple towns reported life safety issues and significant flooding. The municipalities not as severely affected provided mutual aid to Monroe, Weston, Wilton, and Stamford. Town EOCs were opened in numerous municipalities including Stamford, Newtown, and Monroe. The Town of Monroe experienced structural damage to Route 34 with bridge damage located between Route 111 and the Stevenson Dam. The road going into Stevenson Dam and coming from the Dam has been compromised in both directions and on both sides. Route 34 was so severely compromised that the State Department of Transportation cannot yet give an estimate as to when it will be open again. Severe flooding also occurred on Route 53 and Route 57 with reports of structural integrity issues on the roads and 4 bridges in the area. As of 11PM, Wilton recommended residents in one part of town evacuate.

DEMHS Region 2, which includes New Haven County, experienced numerous hazards and life safety issues. The Town of Seymour reported that Route 67 was significantly compromised and unsafe. The Town of Seymour also reported sheltering approximately 20 residents during the storm and overnight. Two other towns in the area reported roads that were believed to be destroyed. The local fire departments worked overnight and were requesting for mutual aid to help cover the next shift.

Flood waters significantly affected railroad tracks across the state, closing the Metro North Lines. The Danbury line service was suspended with no alternate transportation available. The Maybrook freight line is significantly damaged with 200 feet washout. Although some lines have re-opened, some remain compromised.

On August 19, 2024, at 12:45PM, I signed a State of Civil Preparedness Emergency regarding the extensive and severe flooding. Additionally, the State EOC continued to be in enhanced monitoring mode due to additional rainfall and gusty winds predicted during a storm occurring in the evening of August 19, 2024. In response to the situation, I took appropriate action under state law. The State Response Framework was activated in accordance with Section 501(a) of the Stafford Act. The State began taking emergency protective measures on August 18, 2024, which continued into August 19, 2024, and beyond.

This declaration is necessary in order to provide direct federal assistance to meet critical emergency protective requirements and provide temporary restorative efforts for life safety, and to provide support and assets for the incident which have overwhelmed the capability or capacity

of State resources. The United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) is requested because dozens of bridges, dams, and other infrastructure have been damaged or destroyed. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is needed because numerous oil tanks, propane cylinders, vehicles, vessels, and drums are floating in multiple waterways. Hundreds of properties have oil tanks that have been submerged in flood waters. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) assistance will be required for the numerous destroyed or compromised state roads. The USACE, EPA, and other direct federal assistance that may be identified in the coming days, are needed to provide technical and advisory assistance.

Pursuant to 44 CFR Section 206.35, I have determined that this situation is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary to save lives, protect property, public health and safety, and/or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster. I am specifically requesting Categories A and B, including Direct Federal Assistance. I am specifically requesting reimbursement at 100% for Categories A and B, including Emergency Protective Measures and Direct Federal Assistance for the resources necessary to provide the necessary temporary restorative measures to protect the life and safety of Connecticut residents.

I am specifically requesting this assistance for Fairfield, Litchfield, and New Haven Counties in Connecticut for the incident period beginning Sunday August 18, 2024 and continuing. Any additional severe weather will continue to be a major concern as we are in the midst of hurricane season.

In addition to the preceding narrative of state and local assets deployed in support of this emergency, the following information is furnished on the nature and amount of additional state and local resources that have been used or will be used to alleviate conditions of this emergency and to provide emergency protective measures and temporary efforts to protect the life safety of CT residents:

- The Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security (DEMHS) activated its regional offices starting at 1PM on August 18<sup>th</sup>, and actively opened virtual emergency operations at 5PM on August 18<sup>th</sup>. The virtual emergency operations remained open throughout the night and continued throughout the day on August 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Multiple state agencies and local personnel, including Connecticut DOT and Connecticut DEEP, worked throughout the day and night on August 18 throughout August 19, and continuing today and into the coming days if not weeks.
- The state Urban Search and Rescue Swiftwater Team was activated and assisted in over 100 evacuations on August 18<sup>th</sup> during the day and throughout the night.

I certify that for this emergency, the State and local governments will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act. I request 100% reimbursement for Categories A and B for costs associated with the emergency protective measures and temporary restorative efforts conducted to protect lives and property, and direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property.

- (a) The State requires this assistance in order to help fill the shortfalls in the State's resources. Also, in some cases, the assistance is not likely to be available within the necessary time frame; in other cases, the assistance requires subject matter expertise not otherwise available.
- (b) We request that a FEMA State Liaison Officer be designated.
- (c) We request that the Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, as well as other federal subject matter experts be available if needed.

In accordance with 44 CFR Section 206.208, the State of Connecticut agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance:

1. Provide, without cost to the United States, all lands, easements, and rights-of-way necessary to accomplish the approved work;
2. Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work;
3. Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State Agreement; and
4. Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

In addition, I anticipate the possible need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health, and safety. Pursuant to Sections 502 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 USC Sections 5192 and 5173, the State agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for removal of debris.

William Turner, State Emergency Management Director within the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection is designated as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with FEMA in conducting damage assessments and may provide further information or justification on my behalf.



---

Ned Lamont, Governor