

Gov. Walker: Announces \$1 million in CDBG funding for severe weather recovery in Crawford & Vernon Counties

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Up to \$7 Million in Additional CDBG Funding Available for Other Affected Counties

MADISON – Governor Scott Walker announced today that Crawford and Vernon counties in southwest Wisconsin will each receive an additional \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant-Emergency Assistance Program (CDBG-EAP) funding to assist low-income households affected by recent severe storms and flash flooding. The funds are part of up to \$8 million that DOA has in available CDBG-EAP funding to help counties in their recovery efforts. “This critical funding will help eligible residents recover from the damaging late summer storms and flooding by offering financial assistance to rehabilitate or, in some cases, to replace the homes they lost or to relocate,” Governor Walker said. “This is part of the millions in funding that my Administration has made available to support affected residents and businesses as they rebuild.”

The CDBG-EAP program is administered by the Wisconsin Department of Administration’s Division of Energy, Housing & Community Resources (DOA/DEHCR). Occupants of housing units receiving assistance under the grant must have incomes at 80 percent or below the median income limits that the federal government defines for each county. The funds can also be used for certain public facility and infrastructure repairs, with a 25 percent match by the county.

DOA has previously awarded CDBG-EAP funds to both counties to recover from previous weather disasters. With today’s announcements, Vernon County has been awarded \$2.3 million from the program since December 2016, and Crawford County has been awarded over \$1 million since January 2017. DOA is working with other counties that may apply for additional CDBG-EAP funds.

The CDBG-EAP grant program is one of numerous programs and initiatives launched by agencies in Governor Walker’s Cabinet, which has been coordinating with local governments, emergency managers a variety of other organizations and volunteers to make resources available to those affected since flooding and storms hit the state in August.

On September 14, Governor Walker [announced](#) two programs totaling \$4 million to help Wisconsin homeowners and businesses impacted by the flooding:

- Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) launched its \$2 million Flood Relief Loan program to provide no-interest loans of up to \$10,000 for repairing homes damaged by flooding.
- The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), in conjunction with its regional partners, also launched a \$2 million Disaster Recovery Microloan Program aimed at small businesses that will provide an immediate source of funds for necessary restoration work and related expenses.

The following information includes several updates on activities by a variety of state agencies, as well as available resources:

The **Department of Administration (DOA)** has funding available through CDBG-EAP to assist eligible, low to moderate income homeowners in other areas for housing rehabilitation, business assistance, and repair local public infrastructure. Local communities should continue working with DOA/DEHCR to apply. Please visit their [website](#) or call (608) 266-7531. The DOA also reminds local governments that they may use state contracts to purchase goods and services as they recover from flooding and storm damage. A complete list of contracts available to municipal governments can be found on the State’s procurement website, [VendorNet](#). Questions related to state contracts can be directed to Jim Langdon, Administrator of Enterprise Operations at james.langdon@wisconsin.gov or (608) 264-6109.

The **Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP)** will connect affected farmers for assistance and counseling through its Farm Center. The connection can be made by dialing (800) 942-2474. DATCP has a list of [flood-related resources](#) for food safety, home repairs, manure issues, flooded farmland, and animal planning. Food businesses suffering flood damage and needing assistance in determining whether the food can be salvaged should contact James Beix of the Division of Food and Recreational Safety at (608) 224-4665 or james.beix@wisconsin.gov. Major storms bring transient home improvement workers and scams to Wisconsin communities. Contact the Bureau of Consumer Protection at (800) 422-7128 or datcphotline@wisconsin.gov to check on complaints against particular contractors. Farmers should contact their local FSA Office to report damaged crops. FSA will also direct farmers to 211 and or the Local/County Emergency Management (EM) Office to report losses not tracked by the FSA.

The **Department of Children and Families (DCF)** offers Emergency Assistance payments to eligible low-income parents who have at least one child in the house and are facing an emergency due to natural disasters, homelessness or impending homelessness, and energy crisis. This one-time payment is available every 12 months and can be used to pay for a security deposit on a new apartment, stop an eviction on a current apartment, or to pay a utility bill. To learn more about the program, including eligibility and where to apply, visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ea>.

The **Department of Health Services (DHS)** notes that current FoodShare members affected by flooding may request replacement FoodShare benefits, if they had food lost or damaged due to the recent flooding. FoodShare members are eligible for replacement of benefits in the amount of the food lost, but not more than their monthly allotment.

Those living in Dane, Green, Iowa, and Rock Counties have an extended deadline of up until September 19, 2018 to request replacement of FoodShare benefits. FoodShare members affected by flooding in Adams, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Jefferson, Juneau, La Crosse, Monroe, Ozaukee, Sauk, Vernon, and Washington Counties have an extended deadline of up until October 1, 2018, to request replacement FoodShare benefits. FoodShare members in other counties may also be eligible for replacement benefits, but must request replacement benefits within 10 days of the date they lost their food. To request replacement benefits, members should fill out [this form](#) and submit it to their [local income maintenance agency](#). DHS will continue to monitor the ongoing weather and request appropriate waivers to ensure FoodShare members affected by the ongoing flood situation have enough time to seek replacement benefits.

The **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** staff have been on site in various capacities all along the flood impacted area. Conservation Wardens assisted in early rescues and evacuations from flooded homes and businesses. They also assisted local law enforcement officers when called upon with such things as traffic flow, accessing flood areas by boat and other public safety issues. DNR parks crews worked around the clock to repair any damage and clean-up debris at parks and trails impacted by the storms. That work continues as some properties remain closed or partially closed. A list of affected state properties can be found at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/conditions/>. Floodplain engineers, dam safety engineers, and the DNR wastewater team monitored dams in the region and wastewater facilities that were threatened by the initial flooding. Information that can help you keep your family safe in a flooding emergency and minimize damage to your property can be found at: <https://dnr.wi.gov/emergency/FloodCoping.html>.

The **Department of Transportation (DOT)** is rebuilding bridges and highways as recovery efforts continue from the historic rain and flooding in Southern and Central Wisconsin. A number of contracts have been executed to rebuild and repair damaged infrastructure such as the two US 14 bridges in Black Earth with an expected completion in November. The department is also developing and negotiating contracts to rebuild and repair damaged infrastructure. Department engineering staff have been making on-site evaluations as flood waters recede and continue to work as needed in the field to assess damages. Additionally, the department continues to partner with county highway departments to make necessary repairs. Public safety remains core to WisDOT’s recovery efforts and the department is continuing to evaluate detours and post timely information to [511wi.gov](#).

The **Department of Workforce Development (DWD)** can provide unemployment benefits to working Wisconsinites whose employer either temporarily or permanently closed due to flooding. Those impacted can file online at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/en/>.

The **Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI)** participated in WEDC’s Post-Disaster Business Resource Partner Meeting in Viroqua. OCI also released statements regarding the [recent severe storms](#) and [widespread flooding](#) in Wisconsin, and included information on flood insurance and [important tips in dealing with storm aftermath](#). For a specific complaint about your insurance, refer it first to the insurance company or agent involved. If you do not receive satisfactory answers, you may contact OCI with questions at (800) 236-8517, ocicomplaints@wisconsin.gov, or visit oci.wi.gov. If you need to file a complaint, you may file on [OCI’s online complaint portal](#). For information regarding the National Flood Insurance Program, visit www.floodsmart.gov.

The **Public Service Commission (PSC)**, along with local utilities, are monitoring power outages across the state. As flooding conditions continue in Wisconsin, the PSC reminds citizens to avoid downed power lines and to be cautious in flooding conditions. If you have any questions or concerns about the power supply at your home or business, please contact your local utility. If you still have questions or concerns after speaking with your local utility, you may contact our consumer affairs division by calling 1-800-225-7729.

The **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)** has developed an Economic Disaster Recovery Guidebook for civic and business leaders, local government officials and business support groups that provides numerous resources and tools that will enable local leaders to develop an economic recovery strategy for their own communities. The manual connects disaster management functions with economic principles to identify key issues and suggested actions before and after disaster. The guidebook can be [downloaded here](#).

Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) continues to coordinate state resources for recovery efforts. Representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Small Business Administration, Wisconsin Emergency Management and other state and local agencies are conducting Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA) this week. The PDA is the first step in seeking federal disaster assistance for flooding and tornadoes that occurred August 17 – September 14. The eight teams are assessing damage to homes, businesses and public infrastructure damaged by the floods and tornadoes. The information gathered will be provided to Governor Walker for his request to President Trump for a federal disaster declaration. Homeowners and businesses impacted by the floods and storms should continue with cleanup and repairs and keep all records and receipts. For more information on state emergency management efforts please visit <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov/flooding/AUG2018.asp>

The **Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)** has authorized \$10,000 in grant funds through its Natural Disaster Program to help victims of the recent flooding in Sauk, Juneau, Adams, Dodge and Columbia counties. The grant monies will provide emergency housing assistance to residents who lost their home due to the damaging floods. WHEDA’s Natural Disaster Grants are used to assist with short-term, emergency housing needs, and are disbursed through a local agent, in this instance the Central Wisconsin Community Action Council, Inc. (CWCAC). Displaced citizens can reach CWCAC at (608) 254-8353.

Additionally, WHEDA’s new \$2 million Flood Relief Loan program will provide no-interest loans of up to \$10,000 to help repair homes damaged by flooding. Although periodic payments are not required, repayment would be due upon the sale of the home during the first 10 years. The loan will be forgiven if not repaid within 10 years. The new loan program will help fill any financial gap, after all insurance proceeds and available federal aid have been used, to repair damaged homes.

Loan eligibility requirements include:

- For residential structures of four units or less, where at least one of the units is owner-occupied and serves as the principal residence of the owner;
 - The borrower must be the owner and have a family income that does not exceed 120 percent of county median income;
 - The borrower will be required to utilize all available insurance proceeds as well as pursue and accept all available federal aid prior to utilizing WHEDA loan proceeds; and
 - The borrower will be required to document the use of WHEDA loan proceeds for eligible uses
- Homeowners interested a WHEDA Flood Relief Loan can call 1-800-562-5546.