



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Contact: Pahl Shipley
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2202

Governor Bill Richardson Urges FEMA to Act on Disaster Declarations for Hatch, Alamogordo

Governor personally called top FEMA official to speed assistance

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson has spoken directly to a top official from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urging the agency to approve Presidential disaster declarations for flood damaged areas of Doña Ana and Otero Counties in New Mexico. The Governor explained the seriousness and urgency of the situation with William Peterson, Region 6 Director for FEMA.

“I made it clear that the New Mexicans in Hatch and Alamogordo need help now - dozens of homes and businesses have been damaged or destroyed, lives have been disrupted, and families are struggling,” said Governor Richardson. “I was impressed by the fact that Bill Peterson was very familiar with the situation and knew the extent of the disaster. I’m hopeful that we’ll get a favorable decision to help get these communities back to normal.”

During the conversation the Governor expressed his concern that his request for a Presidential disaster declaration for Otero County/Alamogordo was made more than one month ago and had yet to be acted upon. Governor Richardson submitted that request on July 14th. The request for a declaration for Hatch was made this past Monday. The Governor also will call officials at the White House to ask for their help in moving the process forward.

If granted, this declaration will make all qualified homeowners, business owners, and renters in Doña Ana County and Otero County eligible for federal assistance.

Yesterday during a tour of the devastated Village of Hatch Governor Richardson also announced that he will release \$15,000 in his federal fiscal relief funds to help 500 displaced Elementary and High School students in Hatch get school supplies. The Governor also announced that the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) approved two portables buildings requested by the Hatch school district for the Elementary and High School.

The PSCOC has \$3 million available in emergency funds this year and Governor Richardson has asked the PSCOC to consider using these funds to help schools impacted by the recent flooding. Per the Governor’s

request, the PSCOC yesterday approved \$200,000 in emergency funding to help with temporary repairs and to complete the engineering design for overall drainage improvements for Sandia High School.

Governor Richardson also announced today that he is going to request the Small Business Administration issue a disaster declaration for Dona Ana, Valencia, Cibola and Sandoval counties and for Acoma and Laguna Pueblos for low-interest emergency loans for affected home owners.

In addition to Doña Ana and Otero counties, the Governor has declared a disaster in 12 other New Mexico flood-impacted counties to free up millions of dollars in state funds for emergency response and clean up.

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