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**From:** Jacobsen, Kristin (GOV)  
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**Subject:** Gov. Gregoire praises quick action on flood damage response and recovery

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**Media Contact: Governor's Communications Office**  
**Phone: 360-902-4136**

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## **Gov. Gregoire praises quick action on flood damage response and recovery**

OLYMPIA – Gov. Chris Gregoire today said local, state and federal teams are working as fast as they can to complete on-the-ground assessments of flood damages throughout Western Washington. The assessments will be finished by Saturday.

“These teams realize the importance of completing their work to help the state move forward in the disaster recovery process,” Gov. Gregoire said. “Thank you to everyone for working around the clock to respond to this disaster.”

The assessments will help determine if additional counties could be eligible for federal individual assistance disaster aid, as well as federal aid to repair damages to public facilities.

“Field reports and my own visits with disaster survivors have clearly shown how critical people’s needs are, and I am confident that the teams of state and federal emergency specialists are moving quickly to address those needs,” the governor said. “With my disaster requests approved last weekend by the President, we have a shortened approval process to add counties to the initial federal disaster declarations for both individual and public assistance programs.”

The governor said a request to add more counties to the federal declaration for individual and public assistance will be made by Monday or sooner, noting that FEMA officials have assured her they will act promptly on requests to add Washington counties to the disaster declaration.

She encouraged all residents and business owners in affected counties to report their storm damage to local county emergency management offices. That information is essential to the damage assessments.

“We don’t want to overlook damage that could be eligible for federal assistance, so the state and federal teams may make additional surveys when damages are identified by local emergency managers,” the governor said.

In Grays Harbor and Lewis counties, individuals need to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, using the 1-800-621-FEMA toll-free number or the online registration at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov). In addition, in these and all other impacted counties, storm damage must be reported to the local emergency management office.

More than 2,300 households had registered as of Wednesday for disaster aid and more than \$10,000 has been paid out in disaster aid. The first check was sent seven days after the storm.

“Disaster aid is starting to reach affected citizens and will provide an important first step in helping our state’s recovery,” said Gov. Gregoire.

The generosity of the state’s citizens, businesses and organizations will be another vital part of the state’s recovery from this month’s disaster, the governor said. The state has a new web site to help locate resources for the unique needs of counties and people affected by the storms and flooding. The site, at <http://www.emd.wa.gov>, has a “Donation Coordination” link with a list of requested items.

“This site already has enabled concerned businesses, organizations and citizens to make donations to buy 75 generators to power homes in Lewis County and water to meet the needs of 100 people in Grays Harbor County,” Gov. Gregoire said. “We know there are many others contributing their time and money to help their neighbors in need. These volunteers and contributors deserve our profound thanks and appreciation.”

The public will be able to register for and receive other recovery assistance by phone, online and at Disaster Recovery Centers that will open around the disaster area in the days and weeks ahead.

The governor noted that the Joint Field Office (JFO) opened today in Lacey, where the state and FEMA will work together administering recovery programs to help citizens and businesses, and to repair public infrastructure. State agencies working in or with the JFO include the Washington Emergency Management Division and the state departments of Agriculture, Ecology, Health, Employment Security, Social and Health Services and Transportation, as well as FEMA and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

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| Kristin Jacobsen | **Office of Governor Chris Gregoire** |  
| [kristin.jacobsen@gov.wa.gov](mailto:kristin.jacobsen@gov.wa.gov) | 360-902-4122 |  
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