

STATE OF WASHINGTON

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### **Gov. Gregoire praises federal approval of additional counties to flood disaster declaration**

*Clallam and Kitsap counties granted individual assistance, six others gain public assistance*

OLYMPIA – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) today approved the addition of Clallam and Kitsap counties to the individual assistance disaster declaration for this month's storm and floods. FEMA also approved the state's request to add six more counties for public assistance, including Clallam, Jefferson, King, Skagit, Snohomish and Wahkiakum.

"I want to personally thank Federal Coordinating Officer Tom Davies and his FEMA staff for their hard work and for quickly processing the state's requests to add counties to the storm and flood disaster declaration," said Gov. Gregoire. "The federal response continues to keep pace with the hard work being done by our state and local responders and emergency managers."

"These declarations will bring key aid to help our communities that have suffered so much, and assist in the recovery from this month's storms," the governor said.

FEMA's approval is on the heels of the release of Gov. Gregoire's 2008 budget that would provide state aid for disaster victims. Her budget proposal would include up to \$10 million for the Housing Trust Fund, to be prioritized for affordable housing in those areas hurt the most by the recent storms. It would also create bond authorization for the state's portion of the Chehalis-Centralia Flood Control Project, establish the appropriation authority of \$15 million for the 25 percent match required by FEMA and would allocate \$2 million from the Governor's Economic Development Strategic Reserve Account to make immediate assistance available where federal funds do not help.

The new individual assistance declaration will make housing grants, financial assistance grants and loans to individuals, families and small businesses available to eligible flood and storm survivors in Kitsap and Clallam counties.

Individuals need to register with FEMA, using the 1-800-621-FEMA toll-free number or the online registration at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

As of Wednesday, disaster aid registrations totaled nearly 5,000, with more than \$6.7 million approved in disaster aid.

Today's declaration for public assistance not only includes funds to be directed to help repair critical roads and bridges, water and sewer facilities and public buildings for the six new counties, but it also expands the declarations for the first six counties beyond aid for only debris removal and life safety measures to include public infrastructure.

The total number of counties now eligible for complete FEMA public assistance is 12. The other six counties declared are Grays Harbor, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston. The total number of counties eligible for individual assistance now stands at seven, including Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston and today's additions of Clallam and Kitsap.

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