



State of West Virginia

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Governor Justice Requests Presidential Disaster Declaration for May 6 Flooding

State agencies, partners use innovative technology to bring assistance to citizens as quickly as possible.

CHARLESTON, W.VA.—On Friday, Gov. Jim Justice submitted a request to President Joe Biden and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for West Virginia due to flooding on May 6, 2022. Gov. Justice has declared a [State of Emergency](#) for Cabell, Putnam, and Roane counties related to the flooding.

“As with all disasters, I directed our state agencies to use every tool and partnership to respond to immediate needs and document damages that our citizens and communities are experiencing,” said Gov. Justice. “I am absolutely focused on bringing West Virginians the disaster relief needed to help get things back to normal.”

While gathering information to request a Presidential Disaster Declaration can be a lengthy process, the West Virginia Emergency Management Division (WVEMD) used innovative technology to effectively collect data for this event. The most significant contribution to this was the online damage assessment tool, which allowed WVEMD to collect and validate damages more efficiently and meet the 30-day window to submit the request for a declaration.

In another move toward modernization, Cabell County Emergency Management used drone footage to assist during the active disaster and the damage assessment process. Using drone footage allowed WVEMD to display the extent and magnitude of the damages to federal partners as part of joint preliminary damage assessments.

The governor’s request for a disaster declaration includes [Individual Assistance](#) with the possibility of receiving [Hazard Mitigation Assistance](#) and [Small Business Administration Disaster Loans](#). The May 6 flooding event did not meet FEMA’s threshold to request [Public Assistance](#).

“I am extremely proud of the technology and teamwork used during this disaster,” said WVEMD Director GE McCabe. “Allowing residents to enter damage assessments directly and using drone footage to show damages has been a tremendous help to this process.”

While the Governor’s State of Emergency declaration covered Cabell, Putnam, and Roane counties, only Cabell and Wayne counties reached the magnitude of damages to be part of West Virginia’s request for assistance. Should it be granted, all 55 West Virginia counties will be eligible to submit applications for hazard mitigation funding.

A decision regarding the disaster declaration is contingent upon the President’s schedule. There are no time constraints once the request has been submitted.

For more information on the disaster declaration process, please visit [How a Disaster Gets Declared](#) or www.fema.gov.

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