

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 17, 2010

CONTACT: Peter Judge, MEMA PIO
(508) 820-2002

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES DAMAGE ASSESSMENT TEAM DEPLOYMENT

Teams to Visit Communities to Assess Impacts to Individuals & Businesses

BOSTON, MA - On Tuesday, March 16th, the Patrick-Murray Administration announced that Joint State/Federal Teams will be in the field assessing disaster damage in support of an application to the federal government for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Individual Assistance (IA) Program. The IA Programs, coordinated by MEMA and FEMA, are for individuals who have suffered damage to their homes or businesses and can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

"We are committed to doing everything possible to help hard hit communities and residents get back on their feet," said Governor Deval Patrick. "These damage assessments are the first step in determining if federal assistance may be available and the work of these teams is crucial to securing the presidential disaster declaration."

Joint State/Federal Preliminary Damage Assessment teams from FEMA and a damage assessment team from the Small Business Administration (SBA) will begin assessing damages Wednesday, March 17th. These assessment teams are multi-disciplinary and will consist of state personnel from MEMA, FEMA, SBA, Massachusetts National Guard, American Red Cross and other state officials. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is the first state in New England impacted by the March 2010 Nor'easter to deploy storm damage assessment teams.

The Patrick-Murray Administration will use the data collected by these damage assessment teams to coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and develop a request that President Barack Obama issue a Major Federal Disaster Declaration. Impacted residents and businesses will be notified via the media if the Commonwealth is successful in securing this disaster assistance.

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is the state agency responsible for coordinating federal, state, local, voluntary and private resources during emergencies and disasters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. MEMA provides leadership to: develop plans for effective response to all hazards, disasters or threats; train emergency personnel to protect the public; provide information to the citizenry; and assist individuals, families, businesses and communities to mitigate against, prepare for, and respond to and recover from emergencies, both natural and man made. For additional information about MEMA and Flood Safety, go to www.mass.gov/mema. Continue to follow MEMA on Twitter and Facebook.