

## Note from DEMHS on status of FEMA Preliminary Damage Assessment process

(Highlighted by me)

Good evening,

Below is the response we've been sharing regarding the FEMA Preliminary Damage Assessment Process:

There are two different preliminary damage assessments taking place, one for Public Assistance, or PA, and one for Individual Assistance, or IA. The Initial Damage Assessment conducted with the state and municipalities showed that it was likely that the PA threshold would be met in at least Fairfield, Middlesex and Litchfield Counties. Through continued diligent work, it now also looks like New Haven County may qualify for PA. Right now, the FEMA/SBA team is reviewing the collected information and verifying whether those thresholds are indeed met.

With regard to Individual Assistance, as we have also previously discussed, the FEMA and SBA rules on what constitutes major damage are detailed, very specific, and often more limited than what the average person would consider to be major damage. I have attached the FEMA IA checklist and Pocket Guide which are being used by FEMA for this review. Among other things, the damaged area must be an essential living space, and/or there is structural damage to the integrity of the building, and the damage must be uninsured. Although many towns, particularly in Fairfield County, have provided some data on damages, the data is often incomplete and often has not included insurance information, pictures, etc... We continue to work with the municipalities and residents to collect the data that is needed to conduct the review. The FEMA/SBA team is doing a painstaking review of each property for which there is sufficient information, and identifying those that they believe meet the FEMA and/or SBA definition of a property with major damage, those that have minor damage, etc..... CT DEMHS staff are participating in the review, making the best arguments possible, collecting additional info requested by FEMA, etc.....We are tracking all of this work in order to present the best arguments possible to support a FEMA IA declaration and/or an SBA declaration. The thresholds for a FEMA IA declaration are high, and have been made somewhat stricter with the implementation of a new formula used to calculate the likelihood of a successful FEMA IA declaration—the calculation includes the State's Total Taxable Resources, or TTR, of which CT's is the highest in the nation.

With regard to the timeline, the teams are working every day to verify information and categorize the damages. Site visits are starting tomorrow, in order to hopefully increase the number of residences and business identified by FEMA as having major damage. All of this is being done to try to meet the threshold for damages set by FEMA and the SBA. If it looked like the numbers were hitting the threshold, we would be able to shorten this process. But because, at this time, the data does not appear to meet the IA thresholds, we will continue to collect and analyze the data with FEMA and SBA, again in order to make the best argument possible. The Governor's declaration request will be filed as soon as we have enough data to make the best case possible for CT.