



# Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

August 27, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Through: Acting Regional Administrator Michael Chesney  
FEMA Region V  
536 South Clark Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60605-1521

Dear Mr. President:

I write to you with an urgent request for federal disaster assistance following an unprecedented series of storms that have devastated communities across Wisconsin. Families, kids, homes, and livelihoods have been significantly impacted, and the damage caused by historic storms and flooding has gone beyond the capacity of state and local resources to manage. Following a joint preliminary damage assessment of individual properties with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), we have determined that over 1,500 residential structures were destroyed or sustained major damage, with total damage costs estimated at over \$33 million in just three counties. In addition, initial damage reports indicate over \$43 million in public sector damage throughout six Wisconsin counties.

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a major disaster for the state of Wisconsin as a result of severe storms, straight-line winds, mudslides, and flooding that occurred August 9-12, 2025. Based on the request from counties and the preliminary damage assessments, this request includes Milwaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties for FEMA's Individual Assistance and Public Assistance; and Door, Grant, and Ozaukee counties for Public Assistance only.

Due to the severity of this event and the urgent need for immediate assistance by Wisconsinites in affected areas, I am submitting this request for a major disaster declaration prior to completion of the preliminary damage assessments for Public Assistance to expedite the process and bring critical assistance to our communities as quickly as possible. The validated Public Assistance damages will be submitted to FEMA immediately following the preliminary damage assessments, which are scheduled to start virtually by September 3 and in the field on September 8.

## **Weather Event**

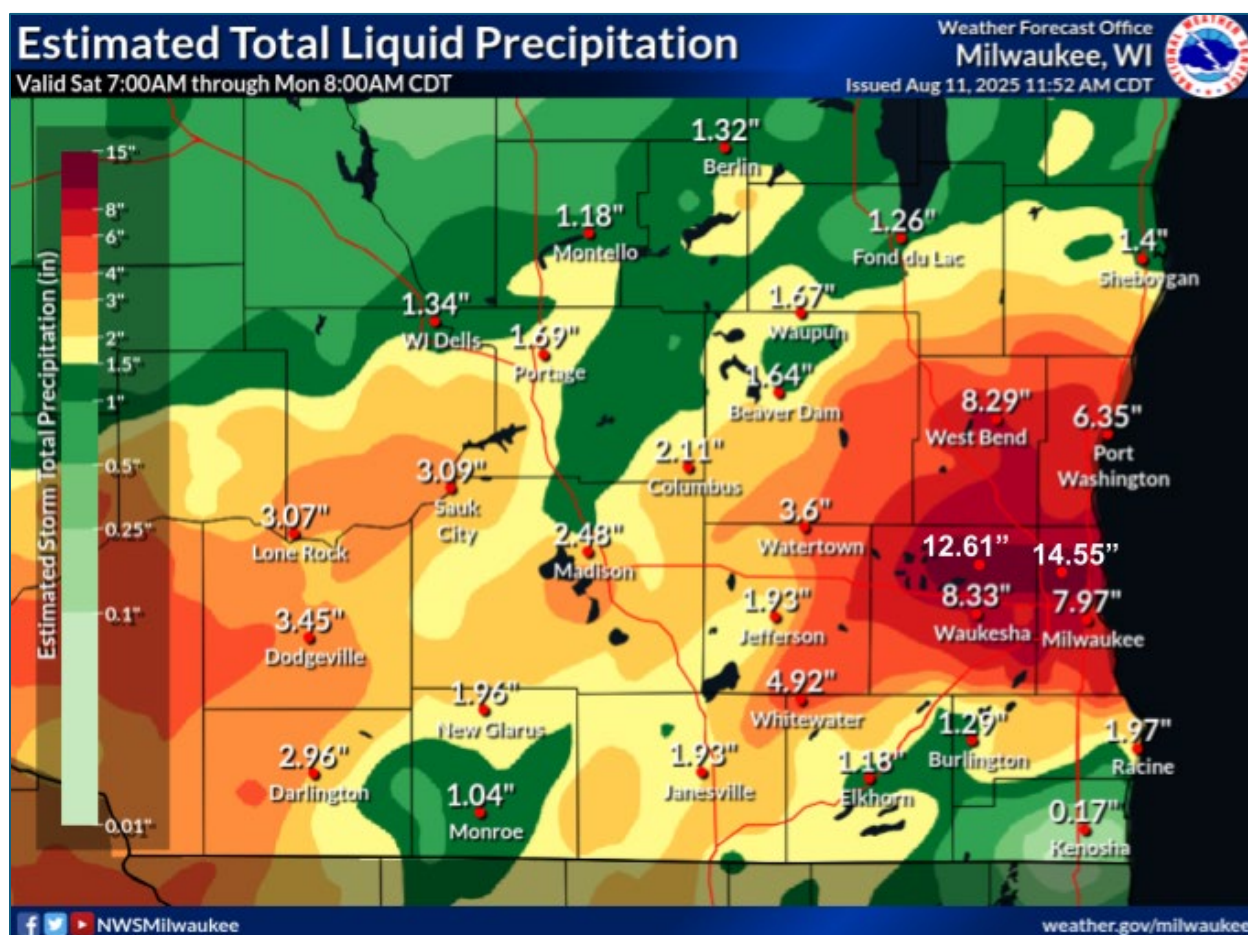
A series of storms from Saturday, August 9, 2025, through Tuesday, August 12, 2025, brought multiple rounds of severe weather with straight-line winds and intense precipitation to a significant portion of Wisconsin. The first set of storms started on Saturday afternoon, August 9, 2025, when thunderstorms began to build and quickly intensified, tracking east and northward from central

Wisconsin during the afternoon hours. High rainfall rates and pockets of wind damage occurred across east-central Wisconsin. Heavy rainfall also occurred with this first round of storms as it moved from west to east across the state.

Additional storms developed later in the evening on August 9 and continued through the early morning hours of Sunday, August 10, hitting the southern portion of Wisconsin. This portion of storms inundated areas of the state with intense localized rainfall, which caused significant flooding. Additional rain continued into Monday, August 11, 2025, contributing to already flooded areas.

Some areas received more than 10 inches of rain. Much of this rain fell on impervious surfaces in urban areas, which increased local flash flooding and sewage system overflows, causing sewer back-ups into homes and businesses. The ground in these areas was also already saturated from previous heavy rainfall during the prior two months, amplifying the destructive impact of the successive August storms. Rather than soaking into the soil, the impervious surfaces and previously saturated soil conditions increased the pooling in low-lying areas and led to infrastructure flooding.

Figure 01 shows the estimated total liquid precipitation received by the impacted area between August 9 and 12. The preliminary total of 14.55 inches of liquid precipitation within a 24-hour period on the northwest side of Milwaukee is under review for a possible new state record for rainfall.



**Figure 01:** Estimated total liquid precipitation received August 9-11, 2025. National Weather Service, Milwaukee/Sullivan, WI, Weather Forecast Office, August 11, 2025.

During this timeframe, the Milwaukee River at Estabrook Park reached major flood stage at 11.19 feet, exceeding the previous record crest by 0.69 feet. The Kinnikinnic River, hitting moderate flood

stage, exceeded the previous record crest by 2.78 feet. Moderate flood stage and record crests were recorded on other rivers in southeastern Wisconsin, including the Menomonee River at Menomonee Falls (8.52'), and the Root River at Franklin (11.71'). The Kinnikinnic River at Milwaukee also set a record for stream flow at 11,500 cubic feet per second. Additionally, gages captured crests in the top three recorded crests for the Fox River at Waukesha (8.58') and Oak Creek at South Milwaukee (10.52'). Figures 02 and 03 list the river gauge crest, flood stage, and streamflow data.

<b>NWS Gage Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Crest (ft)</b>	<b>Crest Ranking</b>	<b>Obs. Flood Stage</b>	<b>Previous Record (ft)</b>	<b>Streamflow Ranking &amp; Observed Peak Flow (cfs)</b>
KINW3 Kinnikinnic R at Milwaukee	8/10	<b>17.19*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	14.41	<b>1<sup>st</sup>: 11,500</b>
MFSW3 Menomonee R at Men Falls	8/10	<b>8.52*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	8.31	<b>4<sup>th</sup>: 1,250</b>
MEEW3 Milw R at Estabrook Park	8/10	<b>11.40*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Major</b>	10.48	<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: 16,200</b>
WKEW3 Fox at Waukesha	8/11	<b>8.62</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Moderate</b>		<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: 2,370</b>
CEDW3 Milw R at Cedarburg	8/11	<b>12.91</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Minor</b>		<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: 5,930</b>
OAKW3 Oak Creek at S Milw	8/10	<b>10.52</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Moderate</b>		<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: 1,930</b>
FRKW3 Root R at Franklin	8/10	<b>11.71*</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	11.00	<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: 4,290</b>

\*New record crest recorded during this event.

**Figure 02:** River gage crest, NWS flood stage, and preliminary streamflow data and ranking. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Water Prediction Service: <https://water.noaa.gov>, accessed August 21, 2025.

<b>Gage Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Crest (ft)</b>	<b>Crest Ranking</b>	<b>Previous Record (ft)</b>	<b>Flow Ranking and Observed Peak Flow (cfs)</b>
Little Menomonee River near Freistadt	8/10	<b>7.60</b>	<b>N/A</b>		<b>1<sup>st</sup>: 527</b>
Little Menomonee R at Milwaukee	8/10	<b>15.04*</b>	<b>1</b>	12.6	<b>3<sup>rd</sup>: 811</b>

<b>Gage Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Crest (ft)</b>	<b>Crest Ranking</b>	<b>Previous Record (ft)</b>	<b>Flow Ranking and Observed Peak Flow (cfs)</b>
Lincoln Creek @ Sherman Blvd Milw	8/10	<b>23.96*</b>	<b>1</b>	22.18	<b>1<sup>st</sup>: 12,500</b>
Underwood Creek at Wauwautosa	8/10	<b>17.89*</b>	<b>1</b>	16.28	<b>No ranking: 1,290</b>
Honey Creek at Wauwatosa	8/10	<b>19.11</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>9<sup>th</sup>: 2,210</b>
Menomonee R at 16th ST Milw	8/10	<b>17.00</b>	<b>N/A</b>		<b>1<sup>st</sup>: 14,600</b>
Root R at Grange Ave Greendale	8/10	<b>18.38</b>	<b>2</b>	19.46	<b>1<sup>st</sup>: 1,230</b>

\*New record crest recorded during this event.

**Figure 03:** River gauge crest and streamflow data from USGS from locations without NWS flood stages defined. United States Geological Survey, Explore USGS water data: <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/explore/>, accessed August 21, 2025.

### **Emergency Declarations**

In response to the situation, I took appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the State Emergency Plan on August 11, 2025, in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act, and issued Executive Order #272 on August 11, 2025, proclaiming that a State of Emergency existed statewide. In this Order, I directed all state agencies to assist as appropriate to support response and recovery efforts statewide. Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties, along with many municipalities, declared States of Emergency by August 11, 2025.

### **Deaths and Hospitalization**

Tragically, one death and one hospitalization occurred as a result of this event. Residents in the village of Germantown in Washington County set up a generator in their garage to run their sump pump after the home lost power. The residents were found unconscious from carbon monoxide poisoning. One resident died; the other was hospitalized and recovered.

Two additional possible fatalities related to flooding are in the process of being confirmed. On August 23, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and other news media outlets reported that the bodies of two unhoused people were found in Lake Michigan on August 10 and August 13. The individuals were reported to have lived in an encampment under a bridge across the Kinnikinnic River, which experienced record-breaking flooding in this event. However, the causes of death are still being investigated. Two additional unhoused individuals who stayed in the area regularly are also reported as missing.

### **Community Impacts and Urgency**

Many of the communities impacted by this storm system are among the most vulnerable in the state, especially in Milwaukee County, where damage is the most severe. This includes areas with high rates of poverty and large numbers of people with disabilities. Enclosure D contains maps showing these metrics. Homes that have had repetitive flood damage over the years are now uninhabitable and unsafe. Lack of income and borrowing ability prevent homeowners from repairing critical housing components, like furnaces, water heaters, and foundations. Mold remediation and well testing are also beyond the ability of many residents to complete without assistance. With cooler temperatures and winter rapidly approaching, this is an extremely urgent situation.

An additional compounding factor is the lack of available housing units. As displaced individuals and families seek long-term shelter, they must travel long distances from their hometowns and workplaces to find any available rental housing, which is often beyond their financial capabilities. Paying for rental housing while keeping up with mortgage payments on their primary homes is also untenable for many displaced individuals in the impacted areas. Impacted parts of the state are likely to see an unprecedented number of mortgage foreclosures. Reduced available affordable housing will also put a strain on local housing markets.

Individuals in the impacted areas suffered damage not only to their homes but also to their belongings. Many lost furniture, treasured possessions, and critical supplies such as food and medication. According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WI DHS), between August 9 and 22, FoodShare (Wisconsin's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP) replacement food benefits were requested by 5,129 residents in Milwaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties.

**FoodShare Replacement  
Food Benefits Requests,  
August 9-22, 2025**

County	Requests
Milwaukee	4,816
Washington	82
Waukesha	231
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,129</b>

It was not just individual homes affected by these storms. Business districts in several communities, including pockets of small businesses, were inundated with high flood waters. Businesses were not only physically damaged and forced to close at least temporarily, but employees of those businesses were also unable to work, resulting in lost income for the business and their employees. Infrastructure damage also made roads and bridges impassable, which led to longer commute times and disruption of supply deliveries. Some businesses may never reopen.

In addition to damaged homes and businesses, all six counties included in this request suffered significant damage to infrastructure. This not only stressed state and local resources but also affected residents who rely on this infrastructure for their employment and daily activities. Road and highway closures throughout southeastern Wisconsin made travel difficult, impacting worker commute times to employment sites as well as supply deliveries to employers. Police, fire, and EMS teams had to follow detour routes, lengthening response times in life-threatening situations. Multiple sites along Interstate Highways 41 and 43 were closed or partially closed on August 10 and 11. State Trunk Highway 175 at the American Family Field interchange was closed from August 9, 9:40 p.m., through August 10, 7:00 p.m. This closure negatively impacted traffic for the Brewers game held at 1:10 p.m. on August 10. Due to power outages, traffic signals throughout the area were not working, making road travel even more dangerous.

Wisconsin is a state that experiences and generates significant revenue from tourism in the summer. This event impacted tourism significantly in Door County, a weekend destination for many around the Midwest. It also affected revenues typically generated by the Wisconsin State Fair in West Allis. State Fair officials estimated that closing the fair early on August 9 and canceling on August 10 led to an attendance loss of 100,000 fairgoers and over \$8 million in revenue.

Overall, emergency responders, state and local government agencies, nonprofit and volunteer organizations, businesses, and the public have come together to respond to and begin recovery from this event. We will continue to lead the rebuilding efforts using state, local, and nonprofit resources to the maximum extent possible. We will leverage all available resources and funding to maximize the impact of any additional federal resources received through a federal disaster declaration to ensure taxpayer dollars are being spent wisely and effectively, and to minimize the impact of any future similar disaster event.



## **Local Impacts**

### **Milwaukee County**

On August 9, 2025, Milwaukee County received 14.55 inches of rain within a 24-hour period. The storm triggered multiple sanitary sewer overflows, a sewage treatment facility overflow at the South Shore Water Reclamation Facility, and an effluent violation. Damage from this storm can be seen countywide due to this 1,000-year flood event. This event caused several areas to become inaccessible during peak flooding due to roadway inundation; brought about major damage to homes and apartment buildings from sewer backups and surface flooding; and compromised critical infrastructure like public safety communications in Wauwatosa and the city of Milwaukee's largest public works repair and transfer facilities. Additionally, 38,176 homes lost power for an average of 10 hours across Milwaukee County.

Milwaukee County and its 19 municipalities rapidly activated emergency operations, prioritized life safety through water rescues and sheltering, and coordinated damage assessments with state and volunteer partners. On August 10, Milwaukee County requested and received two additional swift water rescue teams through mutual aid to assist with rescues. Mutual aid and non-government partnerships were critical in addressing surge demand for rescues, debris removal, and household support. Sustained coordination will be required to manage debris clearance, long-term housing recovery, and restoration of critical facilities and utilities.

The county reported two possible deaths (confirmation of cause of death pending for both) and multiple injury incidents associated with evacuations from flooded structures, contact with energized equipment in wet environments, and post-flood cleanup.

The floods created layered health and safety risks across Milwaukee County, magnified in the city of Milwaukee, where more than 1,500 residents—mostly in the city's most vulnerable neighborhoods—still require cleanup support. Mold growth, sewage contamination, and unstable foundations are compounding risks. Emergency condemnation and demolition orders are underway to prevent the collapse of severely damaged homes before winter, while vulnerable residents continue to face heightened impacts on their safety and physical and mental health. Residents and responders were exposed to sewage, gasoline, solvents, and other household chemicals displaced into living spaces and flood zones, and rapid growth of mold and mildew was reported in lower levels and basements of homes. Saturated furniture, spoiled food, sharp debris piled on curbs, and isolated incidents involving paint, fuel, or cleaning agents created unsafe cleanup conditions. Restoration companies were unable to respond quickly due to the volume of demand, leaving families in unsafe or unsanitary conditions for days or weeks.

Households with access and functional needs encountered compounded barriers: mobility constraints amid debris and flooded infrastructure, communication and language gaps, and interrupted access to supportive spaces and equipment. While mass displacement was limited, targeted accessibility, translation, transportation, and durable medical equipment support remain critical to stabilize recovery for these residents. Flooded basements and common areas compromised accessibility features (elevators, pathways, and ramps) and increased the need for durable and consumable medical items for residents sheltering in place or temporarily displaced. Local health departments report elevated calls related to mold, waterborne illness risk, and unsafe living conditions among older adults and people with disabilities.

Flooding severely disrupted businesses across Milwaukee County, with healthcare, retail, and cultural facilities among the hardest hit. In Brown Deer, Rogers Behavioral Health Clinic sustained extensive flooding, rendering its facility unsafe and displacing around 100 employees and patients. Additional businesses in the commercial corridor also reported losses. In Wauwatosa, flooding closed major employers and cultural institutions, including storage facilities in Aurora, Milwaukee Repertory Theater's set/costume facility, Hansen Company, and MKE Trucking, with collective losses estimated at \$25–30 million, with some facilities lacking flood insurance. Local restaurants

such as Jose's Blue Sombrero and Café Hollander also closed, leaving dozens of employees temporarily out of work and facing uninsured losses. Event cancellations like the 2025 USA Triathlon Sprint National Championships and Paratriathlon National Championships, scheduled for August 10, compounded revenue losses for nearby small businesses. These closures and layoffs will ripple through the community, creating near-term unemployment and threatening long-term economic stability for corridor businesses already operating on thin profit margins.

One bridge in Bayside sustained washout damage around its catch basins. As the only access point to a neighborhood, the damage poses significant mobility and emergency access risks. Wauwatosa Fire Department responded to over 200 calls in 24 hours, conducting about 70 rescues from flooded areas, including saving individuals clinging to trees in swift water. In Brown Deer on North 47th Street, a bridge/culvert collapsed and is estimated to cost up to \$2 million to replace. The flooding caused tens of millions of dollars in infrastructure damage countywide. Multiple bridges, culverts, and sewer systems remain under inspection, with closures disrupting daily travel, emergency response, and commerce. Municipalities are incurring immediate repair and debris removal costs while facing uncertainty about the long-term stability of underground systems. Education systems were also heavily impacted, with 22 Milwaukee Public School facilities sustaining water damage to classrooms, cafeterias, and HVAC systems, threatening the start of the school year, while Marquette University's athletic fields were submerged.

Many affected households lack flood insurance or are under-insured, compounding financial hardship. Multi-family complexes and assisted living facilities, including Stratford Village Townhomes and Rogers Behavioral Health Clinic, required full evacuation, amplifying displacement in higher-density and vulnerable populations. Elderly and renters in low-income neighborhoods face disproportionate hardship with the disruption of Hart Park Senior Center in Wauwatosa, which removed a key social/meal resource. The disaster has created widespread mental health strain as families faced displacement, prolonged disruption, and uncertainty in recovery.

Unique recovery barriers in Milwaukee County include widespread debris management challenges, under-insurance among impacted households, sewer infrastructure overwhelmed beyond existing mitigation plans, which produced flood damage well outside established floodplains, and disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations. These conditions underscore the need for federal assistance to stabilize recovery and prevent long-term harm to residents and community systems.

### **Waukesha County**

Waukesha County was impacted by flooding beginning on August 9, 2025. The county declared a State of Emergency on August 10, 2025. Many communities across Waukesha County were impacted by severe flooding, with the heaviest effects concentrated in the eastern and central portions of the county. However, northwestern portions of the county were also impacted as rising water levels eroded dams and threatened homes. Widespread flooding damaged residences, public safety facilities, schools, daycares, wastewater systems, roadways, critical infrastructure, and government infrastructure, while straining emergency services and utilities. Numerous public facilities, vehicles, and heavy equipment were rendered inoperable from floodwater damage. Essential services, including law enforcement, fire/EMS, wastewater, transportation, and 9-1-1 dispatch, experienced sharp increases in demand and operational disruptions. While the county avoided fatalities, the flooding caused tens of millions of dollars in residential, public infrastructure, and service-related damage, overwhelming local capacity to respond and recover.

Flooding caused temporary and long-term impacts and closures for businesses across Waukesha County. Businesses incurred operational disruption, damaged facilities and equipment, and loss of inventory. With over 33 road closures, impassable streets, and public transit interruptions, employee access and deliveries across the county were further hindered. Many businesses required cleanup and repairs before resuming normal operations.

Across Waukesha County, flooding caused disruptions to electrical and natural gas services, affecting over 76,000 customers with the longest outages lasting up to one week. Wastewater infrastructure was heavily impacted, with lift station inundations and failures, bypass pumping, and sewer overflows requiring emergency operations. The city of Delafield required continuous bypass pumping to prevent raw sewage backups into more than 200 residential basements. In the city of Muskego, one lift station was submerged under five feet of water and out of service for 16 hours before restoration. The city of Waukesha experienced two sanitary sewer overflows, discharging an estimated 10,600 gallons of untreated wastewater due to lift station inundation and a broken sewer main.

Water control dams were at risk of erosion damage and catastrophic failure. The city of Muskego Police Department assisted with the voluntary evacuation of the most at-risk areas. The Merton Millpond Dam in the village of Merton had flood-caused erosion damage leading to a Level II emergency; emergency repairs to the spillway were authorized by the Department of Natural Resources. Rising water levels along the Pewaukee River necessitated full operational capacity of its dam as well as placement of rocks to prevent erosion, protect the shoreline, and maintain the dam's structural integrity.

Overburdened 9-1-1 dispatch centers faced surges in call volume, and emergency services required emergency staffing increases. In the city of Waukesha, fire and police agencies launched multiple water rescues for residents and motorists, evacuating homes and sustaining elevated staffing levels for over a week as the Fox River approached record flood stage. The Waukesha County Communications Center fielded a total of 8,459 incoming calls, 2,135 of which were 9-1-1 calls, representing a 34 percent increase in total call volume and 35 percent increase in 9-1-1 calls compared to the same timeframe in 2024.

County government services such as the Aging and Disability Resource Center's transportation programs (accessible vans and several senior taxi organizations) that provide services to 20.8 percent of the county's over 65 population and 9.4 percent of Waukesha's population with disabilities, experienced numerous delays, detours, and cancellations, resulting in clients having increased fares and being late for work or doctor's appointments. The county's Children & Family Services worked overtime to provide childcare for families whose homes were impacted by flood damage. Various county department staff were unable to work for up to two days after experiencing damage to personal property.

The total loss to individuals, families, and local/county governments due to flooding in Waukesha County is estimated to be over \$100 million.

### **Washington County**

During the late evening hours of Saturday, August 9, 2025, heavy rainfall began inundating areas throughout Washington County, including the city of West Bend; the villages of Germantown and Richfield; and the towns of Farmington and West Bend. This heavy rainfall persisted through the early hours of Sunday, August 10, 2025, with a total accumulation of 10-13 inches in localized areas throughout the county. The excessive rainfall in a short amount of time resulted in flash flooding along the Milwaukee River. These floodwaters inundated several homes and commercial buildings, and overwhelmed sewer lines throughout the county, resulting in the spread of sewage into basements.

The heavy rainfall impacted roadways and increased calls for service for first responders for flood-related emergencies. On August 10, two Germantown residents were found unconscious from carbon monoxide poisoning produced by a generator in their garage. The couple needed to use the generator due to power outages caused by the storm to operate a sump pump. As a result, one resident died and the other survived the incident after being transported to a nearby hospital. This was not the only emergency to occur in Germantown. As the Menomonee River continued to rise, one neighborhood in the village became overwhelmed with flooding, and a voluntary evacuation of



48 residents occurred. On August 12, Germantown High School was used as a temporary shelter for eight of those residents. During the voluntary evacuation, the Salvation Army partnered with the Milwaukee Fire Bell Club to provide refreshments to first responders who were conducting evacuations in the affected neighborhood.

Municipalities throughout the county received emergency calls for many issues, including downed trees and power lines, trapped motorists, including one woman who was in labor and on her way to the hospital, and traffic control problems due to traffic light outages. Municipal services were activated to prevent additional damage from taking place during the flood event.

The impacts from this flooding event are widespread, affecting homeowners, businesses, critical infrastructure, and the agricultural industry in Washington County.

The event caused significant damage to residential homes throughout the county. One residential structure was destroyed, and 63 houses experienced major damage from water and sewage entering the basements of structures. On top of this, four rental units and five multi-family housing structures in the county received major damage. Several individuals and families were displaced due to flood waters compromising foundations and sewage backups into basements and living spaces. All residents who have vacated their homes have done so due to structural concerns, increasing mold concerns, and other severe damage, such as HVAC and water heater destruction. As a result, many people are relying on family or nearby hotels to secure safe and reliable shelter.

An initial \$1.82 million in public infrastructure damage is estimated throughout Washington County. Those include road washouts, closures, and bridge damage; public building and equipment damage; debris removal costs; and additional damage to water control facilities, utilities, and parks/recreation facilities.

Many roads and bridges were either washed out or destroyed, including the Indian Lore Bridge in the town of Farmington. This bridge serves as the primary route for all traffic. It experienced significant damage and was rendered impassable, causing traffic to be rerouted by as many as 10 miles. Emergency services response times increased, resulting in delays reaching residents in need of assistance. Several other roads throughout Washington County were also affected by flooding, causing closures to the public and transportation delays.

Several public buildings and equipment were impacted during the event, with damage estimated to exceed \$500,000.00. This has the potential to limit the countywide services available to residents during response and recovery operations. In addition, the West Bend Library and Recreation Center closed due to flooding, eliminating resource lifelines for individuals in need of services and community support.

Police departments, fire services, and parks/forestry departments throughout the county worked to clear debris, remove downed trees, and respond to flooded areas to keep the public safe. These actions stretched the capacity of the municipalities, resulting in multiple local state of emergency declarations.

The business district in the village of West Bend experienced 18 inches of flooding, causing several small businesses to close for a week or more to clean up and repair the damage. This resulted in a loss of wages and salaries for several employees, creating a strain on families and individuals in the community.

Local farmers were also severely impacted by the failure of the Indian Lore Bridge. The closure of the bridge resulted in farmers having to reroute their harvest transportation, creating delays, higher fuel costs, and inefficiencies in supply movement. Additionally, farm fields in the village of Richfield experienced significant flooding, which could result in the harvest being delayed. The interruptions in agricultural processes will create a ripple effect throughout the surrounding communities, as

these farms provide food across the county. Lastly, the delays are likely to create financial hardship for farmers.

On top of these financial impacts, the amount of rainfall caused issues for sanitary systems and water supplies in several communities. There were sanitary sewer overflows at two lift stations in the village of Germantown. During this time, the Menomonee River nearly overtook a third lift station. To protect it, village staff worked to construct a dyke composed of compost, hay bales, and sandbags. The Department of Public Works also operated pumps for 72 hours straight to prevent the lift station from flooding. In addition, a fire truck pumped 5.8 million gallons of river water away from the lift station for more than 65 hours. If the lift station by County Line Road had been compromised, thousands of additional basements could have experienced sewer back-ups.

In the city of West Bend, utility staff reported to the wastewater treatment plant to prevent flood waters from inundating the storm sewer systems. By putting additional pumps in place, they were successfully able to manage the volume of rainwater, river inflow, and effluent discharge.

The water supply in several communities was negatively impacted. The village of Richfield reported that several private wells may have been inundated with floodwater. Due to the number of vehicles and homes that were exposed to flood waters, the wells could be contaminated with toxins from fuel, household cleaning supplies, pesticides, and other contaminants. Several wells were flooded in the village of Germantown, forcing residents to take precautions with their drinking water and conduct testing to ensure it was safe for consumption. Additionally, one of the wells in the village of Germantown was out of service due to a positive test for E. Coli. It is unknown whether the positive test was a result of flooding; Germantown is taking steps to identify the source of the problem.

Response actions to this event included many agencies across several days after the heavy rains and storms subsided. A larger portion of the impacted population throughout Washington County is elderly or has disabilities. Multiple churches distributed cleaning supplies and offered direct services to the elderly and disabled populations that were directly impacted by the flooding. The county provided no-fee dumpsters for residents to dispose of flood damaged items. 2-1-1 Wisconsin was activated for residents to report damage and offer assistance to connect county residents with potential resources.

### **Grant County**

On August 10, 2025, northern and central Grant County experienced severe thunderstorms with torrential rainfall that produced widespread flash flooding with notable impacts in the Village of Bagley and the City of Boscobel after their stormwater systems were overwhelmed. This resulted in flooding of homes and businesses, and damage to public infrastructure. Six Swiftwater Rescue Task Forces were activated, and two were deployed. They assisted in evacuating 12 structures, rescuing four individuals from swift water, and locating over 40 unaccounted-for canoeists and kayakers on the Wisconsin River. They also secured hazards such as floating liquid propane tanks.

Rural township roads, culverts, and bridges, as well as the Grant County Highway System, sustained extensive damage with debris and standing water making many roadways impassable. County highway crews implemented protective measures, assisted townships with emergency barricading, and continue to remove debris from roadways, clear plugged culverts and drainage structures, conduct repairs, and provide engineering support. Local utilities were forced to bypass wastewater treatment, and most sustained some level of damage. In the city of Lancaster, a water main was broken and the wastewater treatment plant flooded, damaging or destroying city vehicles, equipment, and buildings near the site.

Residential damages reported to date include collapsed or compromised foundation walls, structures that had water above the first floor, flooded basements resulting in the destruction of furnaces, water heaters, and other utilities, and widespread mold and mildew contamination. Some basements experienced sewage backflow due to an overwhelmed sanitary system infiltration. Rural

residents have reported impassable driveways, damaged septic systems, and contaminated wells. At least one business sustained water damage exceeding three feet inside the structure.

Three shelters for flood evacuees were open overnight on August 10, one each in the village of Bagley, the village of Blue River, and the city of Boscobel. They accommodated a total of 23 residents for one night. Twenty-five cleanup kits have been distributed. Volunteers have assisted with cleanup, removing wet drywall and insulation, sanitizing homes and basements, and other efforts to make properties habitable and safe. The County Aging and Disability Resource Center has been assisting elderly and disabled residents impacted by flooding. Grant County Emergency Management implemented a case management system and hired a temporary case manager to assist individuals and families with unmet needs. They are also working to secure state and local funding to assist survivors.

The village of Bagley and city of Boscobel are rural communities with below-average household incomes and high poverty levels, 20.0% and 19.2%, respectively (United States Census Bureau, 2020 US Census). This and the magnitude of local resources already expended will make recovery a challenge without additional assistance.

### **Ozaukee County**

During the late evening of August 9, 2025, heavy rainfall began inundating areas throughout Ozaukee County, located in southeastern Wisconsin. The most severe impacts occurred in the city of Port Washington, the village of Grafton, and along Cedar Creek and the Milwaukee River corridor in the cities of Cedarburg and Mequon, and the village of Thiensville. Damage to homes, businesses, and public property occurred in these areas. Interstate Highway 43 was closed due to flooding in two locations for several hours, resulting in detours and delays.

Several homes throughout the county experienced minor damage or were affected, with many residences losing living space in basements and experiencing impacts to mechanical systems, HVAC, and electrical service. Some residents are reported to have evacuated to other locations on their own.

In addition to residential structures, there were reports of damage to municipal stormwater control structures in the city of Port Washington. Storm sewage systems in multiple municipalities were overwhelmed, damaging public parks, county/town roads, and culverts throughout the event. Besides the interstate highway closures mentioned above, multiple local and county roads were also closed due to the flooding between August 9 and August 15, with some closures continuing past August 15 in the city of Mequon. These impacted roadways not only create longer commute times for residents but also prolonged response times for local law enforcement, fire services, and emergency medical services. Critical facilities sustained damage, with sewage and flood waters inundating the Mequon City Hall and impacting one sewer lift station. Water and wastewater cleanup operations were required in the cities of Port Washington and Mequon and the village of Grafton. Electrical outages occurred throughout the county, with most power restored within 24 hours.

During the event, fire and police departments throughout the county rescued multiple residents from stranded vehicles. Public works and law enforcement agencies increased staffing to manage road closures, construct barricades, and remove debris. Ozaukee County Emergency Management and other county officials are actively engaging in outreach efforts to encourage residents to report damage.

Multiple churches and service organizations aided elderly and mobility-limited residents throughout the county with basement clean-ups. In addition, Ozaukee County Emergency Management directed clean-up assistance requests to Team Rubicon, a volunteer disaster response organization. Assistance was limited for residents and was handled on a case-by-case basis through referrals to local government. Local emergencies were declared by the following communities: Ozaukee County;

the cities of Cedarburg, Mequon, and Port Washington; the villages of Grafton and Thiensville; and the town of Cedarburg. Although some damage to homes was reported, after initial assessments in Ozaukee County, it was determined that this damage was limited and does not meet the federal requirements for Individual Assistance.

### **Door County**

In the August 9-12, 2025, storm event, Door County primarily experienced downed trees which damaged roadways making them impassable while also taking down utility lines. Every municipality in the county had damage reports. State Highway 42, along with many municipal roads, was impassable north of Sister Bay. County dispatch received over 700 9-1-1 calls in the first hour after the storms, resulting in all county safety agencies deploying to assist with blocked roads and downed power lines, and to rescue trapped individuals. A shelter that housed 10 people overnight August 9-10 was opened in the village Sister Bay.

Peak power outages reached over 10,000 in Door County, which has a permanent population of 30,066 (United States Census Bureau, 2020 US Census). Some outages lasted over 48 hours. This has a particularly severe impact on the county due to the high population, 31.5%, of residents over age 65.

The full economic impact is currently unknown, but summer is peak tourist season in Door County with about a quarter-million tourists visiting on weekends (Door County Emergency Management Director, Wisconsin Public Radio Interview, <https://www.wpr.org/news/door-county-summer-storm-causes-chaos-closes-popular-tourist-stops>, accessed August 22, 2025). In 2024 Door County had an economic impact of \$651 million from tourism (Wisconsin Tourism County Economic Impact 2024, Travel Wisconsin, <https://www.industry.travelwisconsin.com/research/economic-impact/>, accessed August 22, 2025). Tourists and workers were trapped on Cana Island and Newport State Park due to downed trees on roads. Many tourists cut their travel plans short and left Door County early after the storms; some encountered blocked roads and downed power lines as they departed.

### **State Agency Response**

The following information outlines the nature and amount of state resources that have been used to respond to the significant flooding and wind damage from the August 9-12 storms across Wisconsin.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) opened at Level 2 – Partial Activation – at 12:00 p.m. on August 10, 2025, for this event. The SEOC remained open at Level 2 to provide resource support and situational awareness to the affected jurisdictions through August 22, when operations switched to Level 3 – Enhanced Monitoring – where they remain today.

### **Wisconsin Emergency Management**

In addition to staffing the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) sent numerous personnel to directly support local response efforts. WEM's Field Services Section Supervisor, Volunteer Agency Liaison (VAL), and Region Directors deployed immediately to the hardest-hit counties to provide guidance and assistance to county emergency management directors and elected officials. WEM also mobilized 18 members of the State's Incident Management Team (IMT) to help coordinate initial damage assessment operations for Milwaukee County. WEM staff in the field and IMT members relayed information back to the SEOC and played an integral role in allocating vital state assets to areas that needed them.

WEM's Geographic Information System (GIS) staff provided up-to-date road closure maps, flood zone maps, and story maps with aerial photos. WEM provided 12,500 sandbags and a sandbag machine to Milwaukee County for use at St. Luke's hospital, which was flooded during the storm. WEM's VAL assisted Milwaukee County with establishing volunteer and donations management operations and provided long-term recovery guidance. WEM's Public Information Officers shared

information with counties, municipalities, and the 2-1-1 program, monitored media reports, and issued regular press releases and incident reports.

On August 21 and 22, 12 WEM staff served as Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (JPDA) team members, accompanying FEMA, Small Business Administration, county, and local officials in the field validating initial Individual Assistance damage assessment reports for use in determining whether to request a major disaster declaration from the President.

Over 40 WEM staff supported the flood response in the SEOC, county emergency operations centers, and with damage assessment teams. WEM staff will continue to support as needed, including participating as team members for a JPDA for FEMA's Public Assistance program scheduled for September.

### **Air Coordination Group**

The Wisconsin Air Operations Branch in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) utilizes the Air Coordination Group (ACG) to facilitate the planning and execution of air support to joint, multi-agency response forces in the field. State Aviation assets from the ACG collected high-resolution photos and videos to provide situational awareness, support for planning response and recovery efforts, and damage assessments. This group consisted of staff members from the Wisconsin Drone Network, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Civil Air Patrol (CAP), Wisconsin State Patrol (WSP), Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM), and the Wisconsin National Guard.

The following is a summary of the work conducted by the SEOC Air Operations Branch, the ACG, and WEM GIS personnel in response to the recent flooding event:

- 140 WEM GIS staff hours.
- ACG damage assessment flight maps (2), image sharing mapping application, 480 images.
- Governor Tour maps (2).
- State of Emergency Declared map, by county.
- WEM Damage Assessment Survey management.
- WEM Damage Assessment Dashboard Management.
- Technical support for counties (3) for the use of GIS tools for damage assessments.
- Data management for 4,500 damage assessment surveys and 10gb of damage images .
- Maps for disaster declaration materials (12).
- 10.1 hours spent by WSP conducting an aerial damage assessment.
- 3.5 hours spent by DNR Aeronautics conducting an aerial damage assessment.

### **Wisconsin State Fair**

On Saturday, August 9, the Wisconsin State Fair Park began making cancellations due to the inclement weather. All rides and attractions were closed for the day beginning at 3:52 p.m., with a brief 30-minute period of operations around 6:45 p.m. (scheduled to be in operation until 11:00 p.m.). The Main Stage concerts were cancelled at 7:40 p.m. Between 8:45 p.m. and 8:51 p.m., it was announced that due to excessive flooding, the Park would be closing (scheduled to be in operation until 12:00 a.m.).

On Sunday, August 10, the decision to remain closed was communicated to the public at 8:04 a.m., prior to the public opening of any gates/entrances. The cancellations between Saturday and Sunday led to an estimated attendance loss of over 100,000 fairgoers and a revenue loss of \$2.3 million for the State Fair Park. It is estimated that food/commercial vendors were impacted by a \$5.2 million revenue loss caused by cancellations, and game/ride operators by a \$360,000 revenue loss.

The Main Stage concert cancellations resulted in a \$354,000 loss in tickets refunded to almost 6,000 concertgoers. Exhibition events for Dog Sports and the Champions Challenge Horse Show were cancelled, and didn't allow those exhibitors to showcase.

The total loss in revenue for this cancellation due to flooding was over \$8 million.

### **Wisconsin Department of Transportation**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) worked with county highway commissioners to address flooding issues and assess damage to federal and state roads, culverts, and bridges. WisDOT representatives coordinated with county highway staff for equipment needs and delivery of barricades, signs, portable messaging boards, and other resources to affected counties. WisDOT staff also worked with county highway staff for roadways with extended closures that had significant traffic impacts. These included an Interstate Highway 43 northbound full roadway closure in Ozaukee County, a State Trunk Highway 175 full roadway closure in Milwaukee County, and an Interstate Highway 43 northbound two-lane closure in Washington County. The WisDOT Electrical Field Unit responded to calls for service related to signals not operating across the region, which caused extremely hazardous driving conditions. The 5-1-1 service provided information on road conditions, road closures, and recommended detour routes. WisDOT also provided information to the public on the status of road closures. The total estimated cost for WisDOT's flood response is \$482,500 so far.

WisDOT also worked to stabilize a failed area of embankment on the Union Pacific Railroad, which had recently been completed as part of the I-43 North-South (Glendale to Grafton) project and opened to active rail traffic in December 2023. The estimated cost to WisDOT for the embankment repair work is \$160,000.

WisDOT's Division of State Patrol assisted with residential evacuations in the village of Germantown (Washington County) and enforced closures of Interstate Highway 41 in Washington County and Interstate Highway 43 in Ozaukee County. The State Patrol also assisted local police departments with enforcing closures of Milwaukee County expressways that were flooded during the storm and provided staffing in the State Emergency Operations Center.

### **Department of Administration**

DOA's Bureau of State Risk Management (BSRM) provided technical assistance to state agencies and the University of Wisconsin on procedures to address any potential asset losses. BSRM instructed state agencies to conduct property and vehicle damage inspections, begin emergency recovery and repairs through vendor contracts, and report damages to property through DOA forms and contacts.

DOA monitored flood levels around state office buildings in the city of Waukesha throughout the incident period. While there are no known losses to the state office buildings in Waukesha, additional departmental monitoring and communication efforts were necessary. BSRM received reports of losses from approximately seven state agencies, including University of Wisconsin campuses. BSRM continues to collect, review, and determine the scope of these losses. Reported damage to state and university property includes buildings, building contents, and vehicles. The damage specifically to DOA-owned assets is currently limited to two vehicles.

### **Department of Natural Resources**

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided personnel to respond in the State Emergency Operations Center. Initial operations included monitoring river levels as well as impacted dams in coordination with regional engineers and dam owners; a total of 17 dams had heightened monitoring throughout the incident period. DNR also provided 28 staff from four divisions to support Milwaukee County's damage assessment teams on August 13 and 14. DNR's Public Safety & Resource Protection division remained steadily engaged with local emergency response staff and assisted with evacuation, search and rescue missions, and "ground-truth" monitoring of conditions throughout the Southeast region. Conservation Warden staff have been staged in active areas in every county throughout the Southeast portion of the state. DNR's



Environmental Management staff, particularly the Spills Team, saw an increase in operational tempo as a result of the flooding. DNR's Waukesha Service Center was closed due to flooding.

### **Wisconsin National Guard**

The Wisconsin National Guard (WING) provided support to flooding response efforts from August 10 to 11. The Wisconsin Joint Operations Center (JOC) conducted call triage during the early morning hours of August 10 on the Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) Hotline from citizens and interagency partners. The WING Joint Staff initiated a Crisis Action Planning Group on August 10 in response to a Request for Assistance (RFA) from Milwaukee County which consisted of five high water rescue vehicles and necessary support personnel. Upon approval, 27 servicemembers from the WING were placed in a State Active Duty (SAD) status with nine vehicles, all of which were repositioned in order to support storm response and future operations. Although Milwaukee County withdrew its RFA, all 27 SMs and equipment remained on a SAD standby status until August 11 in anticipation of any follow-on RFAs. Since August 11, the WING has remained postured to support any flood response efforts across the state and has been working with WEM to assess and validate additional RFAs as they are submitted.

### **Department of Health Services**

WI DHS responded to the State Emergency Operations Center as a response partner for Emergency Support Functions 6 and 8. Following the activation, WI DHS fulfilled an emPOWER data request from Waukesha County, monitored emergency room and hospital visits for flooding-related injuries to track trends, and fielded several concerned citizen calls through their human services on-call team. The state survey agency has monitored and communicated with impacted health and residential settings. Due to the FoodShare benefits lost during the incident and following power outages, WI DHS has extended the deadline for FoodShare benefits lost for residents in five counties. WI DHS has also worked with partners to authorize fee-exempt testing for 1,000 post-flood well testing kits, per a request from Washington County, communicated through social media messages about how to test and rectify private wells impacted by flood waters, and addressed questions from local health departments about exposure to and health concerns from contaminants following the flooding event.

### **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation**

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) reached out to regional, county, city, and neighborhood economic development groups to gather impacts on businesses, particularly small businesses. Concurrently with that effort, WEDC began the process of identifying a partner who may implement a disaster recovery program, as well as looking for financial options that would allow a program to be funded.

### **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection**

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection's (DATCP) Bureau of Weights and Measures conducted increased inspections in flooded areas to check for water in underground storage tanks the week of August 11. Four facilities reported water in their underground storage tanks in Washington, Waukesha, and Milwaukee Counties. DATCP also issued a press release warning consumers about scammers who may target owners of affected properties and provided other consumer protection resources to the public.

### **Voluntary Agency Response**

The Wisconsin State Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) has been mobilized through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to support the efforts by municipal, county, and state officials with volunteer and donations management and Long-Term Recovery Groups through technical assistance and guidance. The State VAL has been coordinating with the SEOC to ensure that relief is being delivered to those in need. The following is a summary of the work the State VAL has been coordinating with Wisconsin Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and the Southeast Wisconsin Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD).

United Way of Wisconsin and 2-1-1 Wisconsin have been supporting county emergency management with the collection of unmet needs and damage data reported by individuals from the impacted communities. The numbers reflect a total of more than 20,000 damage reports from survivors. However, due to limited resources from both the government and nonprofits, only about 9,000 of those survivors have been successfully referred to relief organizations for support.

The United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County has begun collecting financial donations to support long-term recovery efforts. These funds will be available to relief organizations for distribution through the Long-Term Recovery Group forming in the Southeast Wisconsin COAD.

The organization Crisis Cleanup was activated to support the flood response and recovery effort. This organization has created a program to allow relief organizations to track the needs and completed cases of homeowners who need cleanup assistance. So far during this event, approximately 6,000 cases of cleanup assistance have been recorded, and only about 500 of those cases have been resolved.

Team Rubicon, one of the largest organizational presences in the state, has been on scene in the greater Milwaukee area for support. This organization has been responding since August 14 and has worked to resolve over 200 cases of cleanup assistance, but thousands of cases remain unresolved. Team Rubicon has been working with four strike teams, a total of 30 volunteers, to perform their missions in the area.

The American Red Cross (ARC) has been supporting a number of different missions across the Milwaukee area since the event took place. ARC volunteers and staff opened three sheltering sites for this event. Those sheltering sites were consolidated, and now the ARC is operating one site at a high school with approximately 50 survivors sheltering there each night. The school year starts next week, so the ARC is working to find a new location by Wednesday, August 27. The ARC has also been out in communities performing a mobile distribution of cleanup kits to survivors. The ARC will activate its client assistance program to support recovery efforts starting August 26.

Samaritan's Purse brought in six teams to provide cleanup and relief to affected residents from the floods. These teams are supporting cleanup efforts and providing direct financial support to those impacted by the disaster. So far, their organization has taken on over 200 cases and only completed 27 to-date. Samaritan's Purse is also supporting volunteerism in the area by working with locals who wish to support their neighbors; their maximum number of volunteers was over 120 in a day.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief has been active in the area since August 12. This organization has brought in more than 2,000 cleanup kits to be distributed to residents. Those kits were all distributed, and more are being assembled; however, there is still a large need for this type of resource for survivors.

The Salvation Army has been providing support since the beginning of the event on or around August 10. The Salvation Army has been supporting the distribution of cleanup kits from the ARC Mobile distribution and from their own Corps Thrift Stores in the Milwaukee area. They are also continuing to support feeding and hydration needs for both volunteers and survivors, having supplied more than 800 meals so far.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is supporting 2-1-1 Wisconsin and the United Way of Wisconsin with remote volunteers to enter information into the Crisis Cleanup online tracking system so that survivors with cleanup needs can be contacted and assisted by organizations doing cleanup. They have also provided chaplains trained in emotional/spiritual care to support the United Church of Christ's Hospitality Center, providing relief and respite to both volunteers and survivors.

As mentioned above, the United Church of Christ has been operating a hospitality center for those seeking assistance and respite during these times. This organization, along with the Wisconsin

Council of Churches (WCC), is also supporting efforts with the ARC and the local government to find an alternate sheltering site as schools are preparing for the new school year. In collaboration with the WCC, they were also able to organize the donation of 1,000 cleanup kits from New England and provided those to The Salvation Army for distribution.

Christ in Action, formerly known as Disaster Ready Chippewa Valley, has been supporting survivor muck-out and cleanup needs, and has also provided chaplains to support emotional/spiritual care needs following this disaster.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief of Minnesota and Wisconsin has supported a need for showers at the current sheltering site. They were able to deploy multiple units to the ARC. The organization is also bringing in two volunteer teams, from Ohio and Kentucky, to support cleanup missions as well as emotional/spiritual care.

Tzu Chi of Milwaukee has been offering volunteer and resource assistance as needed to other responding nonprofits. They have also provided offers of financial assistance through donations to the survivors of the flood.

Adventist Community Services is working to get teams deployed to the Milwaukee area to support survivors needs for cleanup and other assistance. They have also provided critically valuable insight into the process of opening and operating a community warehouse for donated goods.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has begun to support cleanup and muck out for survivors. They have also opened and offered JustServe.org for those organizations that wish to communicate their needs for volunteers to the public.

### **24-Month Disaster History**

Unfortunately, this is not the only recent event to draw on the resources and capacity of the state and its counties. In the previous 24 months, the State of Wisconsin, including many of these same counties, has been impacted by a number of events that have required response by resources from the State and one or more counties.

In the past two years, local applicants reached the federal damage indicator on 24 separate occasions (\$4.60 per capita for Federal Fiscal Year 2024 and \$4.72 per capita for Federal Fiscal Year 2025), making them eligible to receive assistance from the Wisconsin Disaster Fund, the State's assistance program that provides reimbursement to local governments and electric cooperatives for debris removal, emergency protective services, and damage to roads and bridges. These incidents are listed in the table below.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Counties/Tribes</b>	<b>Event Type</b>
10/22-23/2023	Clark, Jackson, Wood	Flood
2/8/2024	Green, Rock	Tornado
4/1-5/2024	Door, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie; Oneida Nation	Wind
5/18/2024	Wood	Wind
5/21/2024	Clark, Columbia, Dane, Door, Eau Claire, Iowa, Lafayette, Marathon, Outagamie, Sauk	Tornado/Wind
5/24/2024	Columbia	Flood/Wind
6/3-5/2024	Columbia, Dodge, Rock	Flood
6/18/2024	Bayfield, Douglas, Polk, Taylor	Flood
6/28/2024	Dane	Flood
7/4-7/2024	Clark, Crawford, Grant, Sauk, Waupaca	Flood/Dam Failure

<b>Date</b>	<b>Counties/Tribes</b>	<b>Event Type</b>
7/13-15/2024	Buffalo, Crawford, Grant, Juneau, Marathon, Monroe, Rock, Sauk	Flood
8/15/2024	Iron	Flood
8/26-30/2024	Barron, Kewaunee, St. Croix, Washburn	Flood/Storm
9/21/2024	Crawford, Grant	Flood
3/14/2025	Jefferson	Wind/Storm
3/19/2025	Door, Florence, Forest, Langlade, Marathon, Marinette, Oneida, Price, Vilas; Forest County Potawatomi, Sokaogon Chippewa Community	Winter Storm/Wind
4/28/2025	Barron, Polk, Shawano	Tornado/Wind
5/15/2025	Chippewa, Clark, Dodge, Racine, St. Croix	Tornado/Wind
6/19-30/2025	Clark, Pepin, Price, Sauk, Wood	Flood/Storm
7/3-9/2025	Dunn, Marinette	Flood/Wind
7/11/2025	Grant	Flood
7/15-19/2025	Bayfield, Dane, Marathon, Waushara; Lac du Flambeau Band	Flood/Tornado/Wind
7/22-30/2025	Menominee, St. Croix	Flood/Wind

In those events, the state has been or will be assisting county and local governments in recouping some of their costs through the Wisconsin Disaster Fund (WDF) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Disaster Damage Aids program. Current eligible damage requests for the WDF program total close to \$3 million that is yet to be reimbursed, without including the damages from the current event. The state has also already provided \$3 million back to the affected jurisdictions through the WDF program from these same events. This illustrates the state's commitment to helping those in need, but without the assistance of the federal government, it will be very difficult for the citizens of the state to recover and move forward.

### **Local Demographics**

Wisconsin's total taxable resources as reported by the US Department of Treasury for 2022 (most recent available) were \$461.1 billion.

The table below lists several notable demographic features of the counties included in this request. Much of this data is also presented visually in the supporting maps provided as Enclosure D.

<b>Community</b>	<b>Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level, 2019-2023</b>	<b>Percent of Households Receiving SNAP Benefits, Jan. 2025</b>	<b>Percent 65 and Older and 18 and Younger, 2019-2023</b>	<b>Percent Disabled, 2019-2023*</b>	<b>Percent Unemployed, 2019-2023</b>	<b>Percent Non-English Language Speakers, Ages 14+, 2019-2023</b>
National Average	12.4%	12.3%	39.0%	28.7%	5.2%	4.2%
Wisconsin	10.6%	11.6%	39.6%	38.6%	3.3%	1.4%
Door County	8.7%	6.6%	47.5%	32.1%	3.4%	0.6%
Grant County	13.4%	9.1%	39.2%	35.2%	2.8%	0.6%
Milwaukee County	17.5%	25.4%	38.3%	43.4%	4.7%	3.3%

<b>Community</b>	<b>Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level, 2019-2023</b>	<b>Percent of Households Receiving SNAP Benefits, Jan. 2025</b>	<b>Percent 65 and Older and 18 and Younger, 2019-2023</b>	<b>Percent Disabled, 2019-2023*</b>	<b>Percent Unemployed, 2019-2023</b>	<b>Percent Non-English Language Speakers, Ages 14+, 2019-2023</b>
Ozaukee County	4.6%	3.5%	42.1%	32.2%	2.5%	0.7%
Washington County	5.3%	5.1%	40.5%	33.2%	2.7%	0.4%
Waukesha County	5.2%	3.9%	41.1%	31.7%	2.6%	1.1%

\* National average data was updated July 15, 2024.

Data sources:

US Department of Health and Human Services, National Institute on Health, Data Portal, <https://hdpulse.nimhd.nih.gov/data-portal/home>.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services, FoodShare: Wisconsin Data, <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/rsdata.htm>.

Wisconsin Department of Administration, Population and Housing Unit Estimates, <https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/PopulationEstimates.aspx>.

US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Key Statistics and Research, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutritionassistance/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/key-statistics-and-research>.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Demographics of Disability in Wisconsin, <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/physical/demographics.htm>.

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Disability and Health, Disability Impacts All of Us Infographic, <https://www.cdc.gov/disability-and-health/articles-documents/disability-impacts-all-of-us-infographic.html>.

### **Preliminary Damage Assessment**

On August 13, 2025, I requested Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs) from FEMA for the Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA) programs. Virtual PDAs for IA in Milwaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties started August 19, with field PDAs starting August 21 and culminating on August 22.

### **Individual Assistance**

Please refer to Enclosure A (Individual Assistance) submitted with FEMA Form 010-0-13 for the complete dataset. For the three counties surveyed, the IA PDA validated a total of 51 destroyed homes, 1,500 with major damage, 654 with minor damage, and 966 categorized as affected. The following is a breakdown by county, including home ownership percentage:

<b>County</b>	<b>Destroyed</b>	<b>Major</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Affected</b>	<b>% Owner</b>
Milwaukee	46	1,288	420	755	49.83
Washington	1	78	159	147	77.27
Waukesha	4	134	75	64	76.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>N/A</b>

The results revealed that over 1,500 residential structures were destroyed or sustained major damage from the flooding, with total damage costs estimated at over \$30 million in just those three counties. Flood insurance coverage percentages are extremely low ranging, from 0% to 1.6% of damaged structures in the three impacted counties. Therefore, it is expected that most private flood damage will not be covered by insurance.

### **Public Assistance**

FEMA Form 010-0-13 will be updated with Enclosure B (Public Assistance) immediately after the PA PDA results are confirmed. Initial figures indicate over \$42 million in public sector damages in the six counties included in this request. Please see below for initial damage estimates by county and statewide. Door County has not met its per capita indicator for Public Assistance, but there are damages that have not yet been assessed for inclusion in this report. The PDA will help determine whether Door County meets the indicator.

<b>County</b>	<b>Categories of Work</b>	<b>Total Damages</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Damage Per Capita</b>
Door	A B E F G	\$ 35,851.00	30,066	\$ 1.19
Grant	A B C	\$ 1,271,500.00	51,938	\$ 24.48
Milwaukee	All categories	\$ 34,671,230.00	939,489	\$ 36.90
Ozaukee	A B C D E F	\$ 712,000.00	91,503	\$ 7.78
Washington	All categories	\$ 2,129,580.00	136,761	\$ 15.57
Waukesha	All categories	\$ 4,452,523.00	406,978	\$ 10.94
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>All categories</b>	<b>\$ 43,272,684.00</b>	<b>5,686,986</b>	<b>\$ 7.61</b>

### **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Justification**

FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) can provide federal funds for long-term disaster mitigation in recently disaster-impacted communities. The State of Wisconsin is requesting that the President authorize the HMGP only for the communities impacted by the August 9-12, 2025, severe weather event.

The National Institute of Building Sciences publication *Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves: 2019 Report* shows that for every federal dollar spent on riverine flood mitigation, seven dollars are saved in future flood damages. Capitalizing on riverine flood mitigation is an unequivocally sensible investment.

Over 4,500 residential and commercial properties were damaged during this flood disaster. Because it is estimated that over 90% of the damaged properties lie outside the FEMA-mapped floodplain, only a very small number (estimated at less than 2% of damaged structures) have flood insurance policies. For homes and structures that are destroyed or have major damage, meaning the structure is uninhabitable or unusable, housing assistance through FEMA's Individual Assistance (IA) program is capped at \$42,500 per household and will not come close to meeting the needs of the survivors. Investing in flood mitigation measures such as structure acquisition/demolition, structure elevation, and storm sewer upgrades provides an opportunity to avoid future loss of life and eliminate repetitive, expensive flood damage in these communities.

The state of Wisconsin is committed to identifying as much state, local, and non-governmental funding as possible throughout this recovery process. However, due to the magnitude of this event, those resources alone will not meet all recovery and mitigation needs; federal funding is a critical piece of the puzzle. The State of Wisconsin has several grant programs that will be leveraged to maximize the benefits of any federal funding received:

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Municipal Flood Control Program – Funds flood mitigation projects with acquisition/demolition of flood-prone properties as the top priority.



- DNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program – Can be used to acquire and demolish flood-prone properties.
- Community Development Block Grants:
  - Emergency Assistance Program – Available for mitigation projects following a disaster in non-entitlement communities.
  - Entitlement Communities – These communities receive funding directly to administer Community Development Block Grants and can opt to direct some funding to disaster survivor housing needs: Milwaukee County, Waukesha County, cities of Milwaukee, Wauwatosa, and West Allis.
- WEM Pre-Disaster Flood Resilience Grant – Funds restoration projects in flood-prone areas to increase natural flood storage.
- Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMDS) – Funds many types of mitigation projects using sewerage fees collected from residents in the district.

For properties that are destroyed, have major damage, or have repeated damage, one of the most effective mitigation measures is acquisition/demolition. A local government unit, such as the county or municipality where the property resides, will purchase and demolish the structures and restrict the property to open space in perpetuity. The owners receive fair market value for their property and move to a location outside the flood hazard area. This eliminates the risk to residents' lives, structures, and the lives of first responders who no longer have to rescue residents from flooded areas. It also prevents neighborhoods from becoming blighted. With the acquired land, communities can create recreational areas that will serve as flood storage in times of high water. Some structures or neighborhoods have historic or intrinsic value and should not be removed. In those cases, elevation or floodproofing of the structure(s) may be most appropriate to avoid future damage.

Currently, Wisconsin does not have any open application periods for FEMA hazard mitigation grant opportunities. Therefore, there is no FEMA hazard mitigation funding available for these communities to apply for. In the coming months, the affected communities will implement pre-planned mitigation measures and investigate new ones to reduce the impact and cost of future flood hazard events. However, without an open application period, available funding resources will be limited. The need for mitigation funding will exceed the state and local resources due to the magnitude and severity of this flooding disaster.

Wisconsin has five open disaster grants under the HMGP. The table below shows the percentage of subgrants that are in the closeout process and the percentage of federal funds that have been expended to date for each open disaster.

<b>Open Disasters</b>	<b>Year Declared</b>	<b>Percentage of Subgrants in Closeout</b>	<b>Percentage of Federal Funds Expended</b>
FEMA-4383-DR-WI	2018	100%	94%
FEMA-4402-DR-WI	2018	87%	77%
FEMA-4459-DR-WI	2019	69%	73%
FEMA-4477-DR-WI	2020	75%	71%
FEMA-4520-DR-WI (COVID)	2021	45%	70%

Percentage of disaster subgrants in closeout and percentage of expended federal funds for all of Wisconsin's open disaster grants.

The application period for all open disasters has expired and there are no available funds for Wisconsin to direct to the areas impacted by this catastrophic flood event. If HMGP funds are not received with the disaster declaration request, many disaster survivors will lose their homes, communities will lose their tax base, and the entire region will face economic hardship. We are only requesting funds for the impacted counties.

Together, the impacted counties have 326 repetitive loss properties and nine severe repetitive loss properties. This means that floods have damaged these properties on multiple occasions, and they have received multiple paid flood claims through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which is subsidized by taxpayer dollars. These properties are costly to the NFIP and a high priority for Wisconsin's hazard mitigation program.

The communities affected by this flood disaster have experienced flood events in the past and have effectively used federal funds to implement hazard mitigation measures as listed in the table below.

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Mitigation Project</b>	<b>Number of Properties</b>	<b>Federal Funding Source</b>
C. Brookfield	Waukesha	Acquisition/ Demolition	3	HMGP & FMA
C. Glendale	Milwaukee	Acquisition/ Demolition	9	HMGP
C. Milwaukee	Milwaukee, Waukesha	Acquisition/ Demolition	21	HMGP
C. New Berlin	Waukesha	Acquisition/ Demolition	1	HMGP
C. Wauwatosa	Milwaukee	Acquisition/ Demolition	23	HMGP
V. Brown Deer	Milwaukee	Acquisition/ Demolition	9	HMGP
V. Elm Grove	Waukesha	Acquisition/ Demolition	4	HMGP
V. Menomonee Falls	Waukesha	Acquisition/ Demolition	17	HMGP
V. Whitefish Bay	Milwaukee	Flood Risk Reduction: storm sewers, detention basin, bioswales	50 for a 10-year storm; 70 for a 50-year storm; 97 for a 100-year storm	HMGP

HMGP = FEMA's post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

FMA = FEMA's Flood Mitigation Assistance program

The August 9-12 flooding event demonstrated the enormous value of at least two of these mitigation projects.

In the city of Wauwatosa, 23 flood-damaged structures were acquired and demolished using HMGP funding after severe flooding in 1997. The city acquired 65 additional structures in the area with local funding through MMSD. They then used the open space to create Hart Park, which is widely used for recreation and now houses a football field, two pavilions, and a restroom facility. In this event, Hart Park flooded, but no residential structures were damaged, and no lives were put at risk. Fewer swift water rescues were required because these homes were removed, and people were no longer living in an identified flood hazard area.

After the catastrophic flooding in Milwaukee County in 2010, the village of Whitefish Bay used HMGP funds to implement a project to improve the storm sewers, install a dry detention basin, and create bioswales in the median of a major road to ameliorate flooding in a neighborhood near the Milwaukee River. Nearby Estabrook Park was underwater, and neighborhoods directly across the river were flooded, but the homes protected by the mitigation project were not impacted by this event.

Wisconsin is an Enhanced Plan state, meaning we have demonstrated that we have a robust statewide mitigation program involving federal, state, local, nonprofit, and private partners. We have also demonstrated strong grants management processes through annual reviews by FEMA as well as biennial in-depth grants monitoring. This has allowed us to put in place and effectively execute a Program Administration by States (PAS) agreement with FEMA for the HMGP for every disaster declaration for over 10 years. This agreement allows WEM to take on certain program administration tasks, like approving demolition time extensions and hazard mitigation plan updates, to relieve FEMA of some of the burden. There is, of course, ample federal oversight written into the agreement to ensure WEM is meeting all requirements and responsibilities.

Wisconsin has a strong statewide mitigation program that is well-run and leverages all available funding and other resources to ensure benefits to communities are maximized. Previous projects undertaken with federal funding have proven to be effective. The communities impacted by the recent floods desperately need additional federal assistance to have any hope of a full recovery and to reduce future risk from similar events. The State has no available federal mitigation funding because all application periods are closed and all funds awarded. We are requesting that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program be approved for the six counties in addition to the Individual Assistance and/or Public Assistance programs.

### **Conclusion**

I request that the Individual Assistance program be made available in Milwaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties.

I request that the Public Assistance program be made available in Door, Grant, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties.

I request that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program be made available in Door, Grant, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha counties. The state has an approved Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

I certify that for this major disaster, the state and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal shares of costs required by the Stafford Act.

I have designated Greg Engle as the State Coordinating Officer for this request.

In closing, I want to reaffirm the urgency of this request and emphasize the need to assist the survivors and communities as quickly as possible so that life can return to normal. Additionally, winter will set in very soon, with nighttime temperatures already dropping. Many survivors are living in severely damaged homes without furnaces or water heaters. I therefore respectfully request that you review this documentation and act quickly to declare a major disaster for the State of Wisconsin.

Thank you for your assistance and timely consideration of this urgent request.

Respectfully,



Tony Evers  
Governor

Enclosures

OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

Enclosure A: Individual Assistance

Enclosure B: Public Assistance

Enclosure C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs

Enclosure D: Supporting Maps