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**Deval Patrick** in Governor's Office 

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**RESPONDING TO GOVERNOR PATRICK REQUEST, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ISSUES DISASTER DECLARATION TO AID IN ICE STORM RECOVERY EFFORTS****Local Communities, State Agencies and Private Non-Profits to Receive Federal Aid**

BOSTON - Monday, January 05, 2009 - In response to Governor Deval Patrick's request last week, the federal government will provide disaster aid for Massachusetts communities hardest hit by the ice storm on December 11.

"This storm caused significant damage and hardship across the Commonwealth, with many families and businesses still displaced 10 days later and a big mess still to clean up," said Governor Patrick. "I thank President Bush for this federal aid assistance to help us address these issues."

The assistance was authorized under a Major Disaster Declaration for Public Assistance (PA) issued by President Bush following a review of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) analysis of Governor Patrick's request for federal assistance. The PA assistance will be made available to Worcester, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire and Berkshire County - the five counties that exceeded federal financial thresholds for storm-related damage.

Under this Public Assistance Program, affected local governments, state agencies and various eligible private non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for federal funds to be reimbursed for 75% of the approved cost of debris removal, emergency services related to the disaster, and repairing, replacing or restoring damaged public facilities and infrastructure.

Procedures for requesting the assistance will be explained at a series of applicant briefings for local officials at locations to be announced shortly by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These briefings will explain the reimbursement process for receiving federal funds for eligible expenses incurred by state and local governments, as well as eligible non-profit organizations for infrastructure damage and eligible overtime costs.

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