

GOVERNOR CUOMO DECLARES STATE OF EMERGENCY IN 11 COUNTIES AS HEAVY RAINS AND HIGH WINDS CAUSE FLOODING AND POWER OUTAGES

Deploys 200 Members of the National Guard to Assist with Response Operations

More Than 241,000 Power Outages Reported Statewide and Nearly 60 Road Closures in Affected Areas Declared Impassible

Activates State Emergency Operations Center

In Advance of the Storm, Yesterday The Governor Deployed Equipment and Personnel from DHSES, DOT, Thruway Authority, DEC, DPS, NYS Police, NYPA, Canal Corporation and Parks Department

Video of the Governor Meeting with Emergency Response Teams and Surveying Storm Damage Available [Here](#)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today declared a state of emergency for Cayuga, Chautauqua, Dutchess, Erie, Essex, Hamilton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Saratoga and Warren Counties as heavy rains and high winds have caused flooding and power outages throughout most of the state. This extreme weather has caused nearly 60 roads closures across the state and has left more than 241,000 buildings or homes without power. The Governor is deploying 200 members of the National Guard to assist localities with response and clean-up operations. The soldiers and airmen will be deployed over the next 24 hours and will be equipped with bobcats, dump trucks and front-end loaders to assist with clearing debris. The Governor is also activating the State Emergency Operations Center in Albany to Level Four status and directing state agencies to continue deploying emergency response personnel equipment and personnel - most of which are already in the field. New Yorkers are advised to exercise extreme caution and only travel if necessary. Motorists should travel with extra caution as multiple roads are closed and floodwaters may make driving difficult throughout the day.

"Overnight a severe storm hit the state, bringing with it high wind gusts up to 70 miles per hour and heavy rain that caused flash flooding and widespread power outages," Governor Cuomo said. "This morning we did a swift water rescue in Herkimer County where a home was in danger of being swept away, taking five people out of the home including an infant. I am deploying 200 members of the National Guard to impacted areas to assist with response operations. These situations can be a matter of life and death, and I am urging all New Yorkers to exercise extreme caution and only travel if necessary."

In Western New York, strong low pressure moving across southern Quebec will continue to produce damaging winds across the region early this morning. Winds are expected to diminish from west to east by Friday afternoon. Lake effect rain and wet snow showers will continue east of the lakes today, with some minor accumulations possible across

higher terrain this morning. Another surge of colder air could bring more lake effect snow across the higher terrain east of the lakes later Saturday night and Sunday morning.

In the North Country, there is a continued threat for minor flooding around smaller streams and creeks due to runoff from up to three inches of rain last night and very strong west winds picking up this morning, with the strongest winds expected over the Finger Lakes and western Mohawk Valley before noon today. Quiet and much cooler weather is expected tonight through Saturday night.

In the Mohawk Valley, areas of light rain with isolated pockets of moderate rain are expected to continue to exit eastern New York through daybreak. West to northwest winds gusting over 40 mph are expected in most areas through early afternoon today.

Multiple warnings, watches and advisories for flooding and high winds have been issued for several parts of the State, many of which are in effect until Saturday. For a complete list of weather watches, warnings, advisories and latest forecasts, visit the National Weather Service [website](#).

Power Outages

As of 11:45 a.m., there are more than 241,000 power outages with the highest concentrations in upstate New York. 185,000 have been restored. New York's utilities currently have approximately 5,000 workers engaged in damage assessment, response and restoration across the state. Department staff remains in constant communication with the utilities and will continue to monitor their efforts during and after the storm event.

Utilities can provide customers with storm and safety information or customers can call the Department's Call Center for information. The PSC Help Line can be reached by calling 1-800-342-3377.

Agency Operations

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services

The New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services' Emergency Operations Center has been activated to level four status to better assist with the coordination and deployment of state response assets to communities in need. State Stockpiles remain open and are deploying assets to localities including pumps, chainsaws, sandbags and bottled water. The New York State Incident Management Team was deployed this morning to assist local government with incident response. Additionally, all swift water and search and rescue teams from the State Office of Fire Prevention and Control have been deployed throughout the state and are currently conducting a number of operations in the Mohawk Valley.

Department of Transportation

The State Department of Transportation has 3,431 supervisors and operators available statewide. All affected Residency locations will be staffed for 24/7 operation throughout the duration of the event, while mechanic support will be available 24/7 to keep response equipment operational.

Regional Crews are currently engaged in flood and wind response activities.

All available flood/wind response equipment is ready to deploy. Statewide equipment numbers are as follows:

1,512 large dump trucks

45 loaders with grapple

18 vacuum trucks with sewer jet

35 tracked excavators

49 wheeled excavators

55 tractor trailers with lowboy trailer

15 tree crew bucket trucks

38 traffic signal trucks

7 water pumps

76 chippers

There are currently 58 road closures across New York State, including 32 in the Mohawk Valley. Seventeen Damage Assessment Teams and 12 Bridge Assessment Teams are being prepared to deploy to the Mohawk Valley to evaluate storm impacts and assess actions needed to safely reopen roads.

The Department of Transportation currently has the following assets in the Mohawk Valley:

82 large dump trucks

3 loaders with grapple

1 vacuum trucks with sewer jet

8 tracked and wheeled excavators

5 tractor trailers with lowboy trailer

1 tree crew bucket truck

2 traffic signal trucks

7 chippers

Motorists are reminded that State Law mandates that if an intersection is "blacked out" and the traffic signal is not operational, the intersection is automatically an "all way" stop. In the event of closed or blocked roadways due to flooding, downed power lines or debris, motorists are advised to exercise caution and obey all traffic signs or barricades in place, regardless of whether a roadway looks clear.

Thruway Authority

The New York State Thruway Authority brought in additional staff for the overnight hours and are actively inspecting drainage systems and removing debris along the roadway. Staff are monitoring for potential flooding and are ready to assist with the deployment of equipment and resources if needed. Thruway Authority staff have also been deployed to Regional Operation Centers in hardest hit areas such as the Mohawk Valley and Western New York.

The Thruway Authority encourages motorists to download its mobile app which is available to download for free on [iPhone](#) and [Android](#) devices. The app provides motorists direct access to real-time traffic and navigation assistance while on the go. Motorists can also sign up for [TRANSalert e-mails](#), which provide the latest traffic conditions along the Thruway. For real-time updates, motorists can follow [@ThruwayTraffic](#) on Twitter or by visiting www.thruway.ny.gov to see an interactive map showing traffic conditions for the Thruway and other New York State roadways.

Department of Environmental Conservation

Department of Environmental Conservation Police Officers, Forest Rangers, emergency management staff and regional staff are checking sensitive areas and infrastructure for damage from high winds and flooding. Swift water rescue teams have been deployed at several locations and saw crew teams are strategically located to assist with tree clearing and response needs. In addition, all available assets, including utility vehicles, are positioned to assist with any emergency response.

New York State Police

State Police have deployed additional Troopers to the areas hardest hit by flooding, including Herkimer County. All specialty equipment including boats, 4x4s, high axle vehicles and utility vehicles are in service and ready for immediate deployment. The State Police Underwater Recovery Team and Special Operations Response Team are also on standby and ready to assist as needed.

New York Power Authority/Canal Corporation

The New York Power Authority and the Canal Corporation have provided two low-boy trucks to assist with high water management in Herkimer County. NYPA/Canals personnel are monitoring high-water areas and deploying personnel to assets in affected areas.

Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Police crews are currently engaged in clean-up operations, including clearing scattered downed trees and branches, assessing facilities for damage and monitoring low-lying areas for flooding.

Safety Tips

To prepare for potential power outages, New Yorkers should:

Have a list of emergency numbers readily available.

At home or at work, keep a battery-operated radio and flashlight on hand, as well as a supply of batteries. Keep an emergency supply of water, medications, and non-perishable foods handy. If you use medication that requires refrigeration, most can be kept in a closed refrigerator for several hours without a problem - check with your physician or pharmacist.

Make sure you have alternative charging methods for your phone or any device that requires power. Charge cell phones and any battery-powered devices.

If you have space in your refrigerator or freezer, consider filling plastic containers with water, leaving an inch of space inside each one - this will help keep food cold if the power goes out.

If you have an electric garage door opener, locate the manual release level and learn how to operate it.

Keep your car's gas tank at least half-full; gas stations rely on electricity to power their pumps. If you use your car to re-charge devices, do not keep the car running in a garage, partially enclosed space, or close to a home - this can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.

Plan to have an alternative cooking source, such as a camp stove or outdoor grill. Follow appropriate safety rules for its use outside the residence.

If you are considering a generator for your home, consult an electrician or engineer before purchasing and installing.

Have extra blankets, coats, hats, and gloves on hand to keep warm.

If you have a computer, back up files and operating systems regularly. Turn off all computers, monitors, and other devices when they are not being used.

If you rely on anything that is battery-operated or power dependent such as a medical device, determine a back-up plan. For example, if you have a telephone that requires electricity to work, plan for alternate communication such as a standard telephone handset, cell phone, or radio.

Learn about emergency plans in your area, including the location of the closest cooling and warming shelters, by visiting your state's or local website.

If experiencing a power outage, New Yorkers should:

Turn off or disconnect major appliances and other equipment, e.g., computers, in case of a momentary power surge that can damage these devices. Keep one light turned on so you know when power returns. Consider using surge protectors wherever you use electronic equipment.

Call your utility provider to notify them of the outage and listen to local broadcasts for official information. For a list of utilities in NYS visit the New York State Department of Public Service Check to see if your neighbors have power. Check on people with access or functional needs.

Use only flashlights for emergency lighting - candles pose the risk of fire.

Keep refrigerators and freezer doors closed - most food requiring refrigeration can be kept safely in a closed refrigerator for several hours. An unopened refrigerator will keep food cold for approximately four (4) hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours.

Do not use a charcoal grill indoors and do not use a gas stove for heat - they could give off harmful levels of carbon monoxide.

In cold weather, stay warm by dressing in layers and minimizing time spent outdoors. Be aware of cold stress symptoms (i.e., hypothermia) and seek proper medical attention if symptoms appear.

In intense heat, consider going to a movie theater, shopping mall or cooling shelter. If you remain at home, move to the lowest level - cool air falls. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing and drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty.

If you are in a tall building, take the stairs and move to the lowest level of the building. If trapped in an elevator, wait for assistance. Do not attempt to force the doors open. Remain patient - there is plenty of air and the interior of the elevator is designed for passenger safety.

Remember to provide fresh, cool water for your pets.

Eliminate unnecessary travel, especially by car. Traffic signals will stop working during an outage, creating traffic congestion and dangerous driving conditions. If you must drive during a blackout, remember to obey the all-way stop rule at intersections with non-functioning traffic signals.

Remember that equipment such as automated teller machines (ATMs) and elevators may not be working.

If the power may be out for a prolonged period, plan to go to another location, such as the home of a relative or friend, or a public facility that has heat.

For a complete list of weather terms and preparation ideas before during and after power outages, visit the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services website at <http://www.dhSES.ny.gov/oem/safety-info/outage/>.