



Joint Information Center

NEWS

Ruth Ann Minner
Governor

Gregory Patterson
Communications Director

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For Immediate Release

Contact: Ron Gough
(302) 659-3362

Damage Assessment to Begin Statewide

---Aerial and ground reconnaissance under way---

(Smyrna, DE.) Now that the fury of Hurricane Isabel has left Delaware, emergency management officials will begin assessing the damage left behind in Isabel's wake. Aerial and ground surveillance across the State is the order of business for today to determine the impact of near hurricane force winds and driving rains over the past 24 hours. The National Weather Service stated that Delaware received 1 to 2 inches of rain and sustained tropical storm winds and near hurricane gusts during the duration of the storm event.

Delaware National Guard helicopters and Civil Air Patrol reconnaissance flights will provide an aerial snapshot statewide while damage assessment teams on the ground will look at Delaware's infrastructure to determine what repairs need to be made.

Presently, approximately 200,000 – 250,000 Conectiv customers are without service throughout the Delmarva Peninsula while 10,000 Delaware Electrical Co-Op customers are also without power at this time. Due to power outages, only one traffic light in a wide area north of the City of Wilmington is operational.

Flooding is still a major concern across the State especially in low-lying areas. Communities including Seaford, Blades, Bayview and Augustine Beach are experiencing flooding conditions. Residents are urged to use extreme caution in these areas. Earlier this morning, residents in Augustine Beach and Bayview were evacuated due to flooding conditions. In Wilmington, 3000 people evacuated their homes during the storm event; 125 chose to spend the night in a Red Cross shelter while the rest sought refuge elsewhere.

DELDOT is reporting 62 roads closed across the State as a result of flooding, downed trees or power lines.

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The Indian River Inlet Bridge was closed at midnight last night as a precaution. An inspection of the bridge will be conducted early this morning to check on the structural integrity of the span.

The seven Red Cross shelters operational since Wednesday evening remain open at this time. At present, 527 evacuees are still being sheltered.

Several state parks are reporting trees down and some damage. Anyone planning to visit a state park is encouraged to call ahead to see if it is open.

There have been no reports of fatalities in Delaware as result of Hurricane Isabel. Jamie Turner, Director for the Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) said this is welcome news. "We appreciate the cooperation and compliance of the public with the Governor's State of Emergency. Early preparations, constant awareness and heeding the recommendations of the State of Emergency has greatly helped in keeping people safe." Added Turner, "I urge everyone to continue to use extreme caution since flooding, downed power lines and felled trees can cause serious injury."

For up-to-the-minute road conditions, people can listen to WTMC 1380 AM radio or can log onto www.deldot.net.

People with public health concerns can contact the Division of Public Health at (302) 744-4700 or call toll free at 1-888-459-2943.

The Delaware Helpline can also provide the latest information and can be reached at 1-800-273-9500 in-state or 1-800-464-4357 out-of-state.

Emergency management officials are asking citizens not to call 911 except for emergencies only.

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The Joint Information Center is established to ensure timely, accurate, and consistent information is presented to the media for immediate dissemination to the citizens of Delaware.

