



Saginaw
community foundation

SAGINAW COUNTY LONG-TERM DISASTER RECOVERY GROUP

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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What's Next for Saginaw County Flood Victims?

(SAGINAW) Now that President Trump has declared that a major disaster exists in Saginaw County as a result of May's severe storms and flooding, the Saginaw County Long-Term Disaster Recovery Group is reaching out to impacted families with action steps for moving forward.

Anyone in Saginaw County who has sustained damage due to the flood **MUST** apply directly for federal assistance to FEMA, even if they have already reported their damage to the County Emergency Manager or to 211. This can be done by registering online at <http://www.DiasterAssistance.gov>, using the FEMA app, or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 7am– 9pm seven days a week until further notice.

Federal assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help families recover from effects of the flood. The Saginaw County Long-Term Disaster Recovery Group cautions everyone to manage their expectations. Federal assistance is limited to a maximum of \$33,000 with the average award being closer to \$5,000 or less for each incident.

Beginning July 20, the group will have the expertise and assistance of a full-time case manager (funded by the Saginaw Community Foundation) to help impacted families navigate the process of accessing federal, state and local dollars for assistance. If flood victims haven't yet called 211, they should do so immediately. This will get them into a local database the case manager will use for outreach.

Impacted residents are encouraged to follow www.reliefsaginaw.org and Facebook @SaginawCoEM for developing details. The Saginaw County Long-Term Disaster Recover Group will begin working with FEMA as the agency mobilizes a disaster relief center in the future which, in light of COVID-19, may be a drive through system. This is likely to take place in Midland and Gladwin counties first, so continued patience is required.

Meanwhile, flood victims should gather all evidence to show the damage to your home, vehicles, or other structures with photos or video and keep receipts for any expenses you have incurred related to the flood. If your insurance carrier has denied your claim, get a denial letter.

The Saginaw County Long-Term Disaster Recovery Group is made up of key organizations in Saginaw County that are collaborating to ensure that the county's 600+ households affected by May's historic flooding are connected to resources for long-term recovery. The group is concerned that too many people are receiving mixed messages focusing primarily on Midland and Gladwin counties where the devastation was most severe.

"In Saginaw County, we estimate close to \$10 million in damages, with many residents confused about what to do here in our county," says Mark Przybylski, Saginaw County emergency manager. His office, along with United Way of Saginaw County and the Saginaw Community Foundation, have gathered leaders from 211 of Northeastern Michigan, American Red Cross, Michigan State Police, Michigan Community Service Commission, nonprofits, corporations, and faith-based organizations to coordinate efforts to manage the emergency, provide relief, and long-term recovery in Saginaw County.

By the group's estimates, at least 13 homes in Saginaw County were destroyed by the floods, nearly 150 sustained major damage, nearly 160 minor damage, and more than 130 were affected with water in some way. Homes and businesses were particularly affected in the City of Saginaw, Thomas Township, James Township, Saginaw Township, Spaulding Township, Zilwaukee Township, and Tittabawassee Township.

The group fears that Saginaw County residents are missing opportunities to engage in much-needed support.

"Even combining all our resources here locally and working to get maximum assistance from the state and federal government, we will not have the resources to fully restore homes and families," Przybylski says regretfully. "But together, we can stretch and maximize to try to get the best possible outcome for our residents."

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