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McHenry County Receives FEMA Funds for February 2, 2011 Blizzard

WOODSTOCK, IL – As a result of one of the worst winter storms in recent memory, McHenry County received a Presidential Disaster Declaration for the February 2, 2011 Blizzard. The Presidential Disaster Declaration provided the County with public assistance funds to reimburse the extraordinary labor/personnel costs, equipment costs, and consumable materials and supplies available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. While many businesses were closed and residents were snowed in, McHenry County employees worked around the clock to coordinate County snow removal efforts and assist those stranded due to the storm.

Three McHenry County Departments were reimbursed for their expenses for this winter event. Monies were afforded to the McHenry County Sheriff's Office (\$25,604.96), McHenry County Division of Transportation (\$170,553.05), and to

McHenry County Facilities Management (\$10,819.20). McHenry County received a total of \$206,977.21. County-wide, local entities received \$1,579,862 through the Presidential Disaster Declaration.

While the dedicated effort of employees allowed the County to get back up and running after the blizzard subsided, it was also an opportunity for McHenry County to test and rethink its Hazards Mitigation Plan. The McHenry County Hazards Mitigation Plan was the result of a partnership between County, Municipal, Townships, and public safety entities within the County (serving as the McHenry County Hazard Mitigation Committee) to identify the best storm and hazard management practices to mitigate disasters. **McHenry County Emergency Management Agency will host its first annual review of the McHenry County Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan on Thursday, November 10 at 9:00 a.m. in the McHenry County Administration Building – Conference Room B in Woodstock, IL.**



McHenry County Division of Transportation snow plow clearing a road following the February 2 Blizzard.



McHenry County Division of Transportation trucks approaching Route 14 on Hartland Road in rural Woodstock during the February 2 Blizzard.

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The Committee will determine if other mitigation issues or efforts, based on any natural hazard occurrences (such as the winter storm) or input from communities or the public, should be added to the Plan. Information from this meeting will form the basis of the annual report to be submitted to the County Board by the Chairman of this Committee.

Further, McHenry County Emergency Management Coordinating Council will utilize the Hazards Mitigation Plan as a framework for coordinating efforts and County resources, pooling the collective knowledge of all entities within the County to support the ongoing preparation and mitigation for disasters/hazards.

McHenry County Emergency Management Agency Director David Christensen expanded upon the role the Coordinating Council and Hazards Mitigation Plan will have addressing future disasters. “By utilizing the Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Coordinating Council will work to assist those jurisdictions who are lacking resources to do a preliminary damage assessment. As a follow-up to the disasters, we will also review lessons learned here in McHenry County as to what worked well, what didn’t and how to mitigate future damages.” The McHenry County Emergency Management Coordinating Council meets the fourth Thursday of each month in the McHenry County Administration Building in Woodstock, IL.

For more information on the McHenry County Emergency Management Coordinating Council or Hazards Mitigation Plan, please contact David Christensen at 815-338-6400.

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