



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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Navajo Nation declares emergency due to winter weather conditions

WINDOW ROCK – On Tuesday, President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer signed a declaration of emergency issued by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management due to severe winter weather conditions on the Navajo Nation. The declaration allows for local/chapter funding to be used to assist those in need with supplies such as fire wood, food, and other resources in anticipation of the Nation receiving as much as 12-inches of snow this week.

“The resources should go to the elderly, disabled, and those who are unable to leave their homes because of inclement weather and road conditions,” said President Nez. “We encourage chapters to carefully assess local needs to ensure the efficient and effective use of emergency funds to help those that are truly in need.”

The 110 chapters are each required to have an emergency response plan to implement in situations such as adverse weather conditions. Many chapters also have Community Emergency Response Teams in place to help local community members.

President Nez said that maintaining accurate documentation is essential to obtaining assistance through federal entities such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency. He noted that the Navajo Nation may be eligible for reimbursements through FEMA if damages exceed a \$250,000 threshold, in accordance with the federal Stafford Act.

On Tuesday morning, President Nez and Vice President Lizer met with the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management, Division of Transportation, Division of Public Safety, Indian Health Service, Division of Community Development, Department of Health, and other agencies to address emergency response plans due to the winter storms.

“This has to be a team effort and we need to communicate with counties, states, and other entities as well. Today’s declaration is a step in the right direction in being proactive to mobilize resources ahead of time before more storms reach our communities,” added President Nez, while calling on the Commission on Emergency Management to convene a special meeting to consider an emergency declaration.

The Commission on Emergency Management met on Tuesday afternoon and passed resolution CEM 19-02-19, which states that the Commission finds it necessary for responsible Navajo Nation

entities to immediately begin and maintain coordination for use of resources to meet the needs of all communities and activate available emergency resources such as funding to cover personnel, equipment, and other means as determined fit and feasible to restore and sustain vital community infrastructure.

The Navajo Nation Division of Transportation deployed personnel over the weekend to clear snow from roadways and will continue doing so throughout the duration of the stormy weather. Indian Health Service reported that their services have not been impacted by the weather conditions and will continue providing services at all locations.

Vice President Lizer encouraged everyone to check on their parents, grandparents, and those who are disabled to ensure they are well taken care of and that their needs are met.

“If you do not need to drive then please stay home and avoid driving on icy roads,” stated Vice President Lizer. “If you must drive, please be very cautious and please do not drive fast for the safety of yourselves and others.”

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