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President Ben Shelly Expedites Help for To'Hajiilee Chapter

TO'HAJIILEE, N.M. – President Ben Shelly has expedited emergency services to To'Hajiilee Chapter based on their resolution passed to declare a local emergency and is continuing to monitor the chapter for any new developments.

President Shelly ensured that the Executive branch divisions coordinated the delivery of more than 30 cords of wood to the chapter in the span of a week that started on Dec. 30, 2011.

"We helped the To'Hajiilee Chapter with all the resources to our availability. The community issued a state of emergency and our delivery of goods and services ensured the community had critical supplies to endure the extreme conditions," President Shelly said.

To'Hajiilee Chapter has endured muddy roads, freezing temperatures and limited accessibility to food and other needed supplies since a late December snowstorm.

Before the New Year, the chapter was inundated with more than a foot of snow and the chapter passed a resolution declaring a state of emergency on Dec. 28, 2011 and forwarded a letter to President Shelly for assistance.

In a letter to President Shelly, Chapter President Raymond Secatero wrote that the conditions in the northwestern parts of the chapter had roads that were so muddy that not even four-wheeled drive vehicles were able to travel.

"The melting snow makes it impossible to leave the community for food, supplies, medical help and other basic necessities," Chapter President Secatero wrote.

Also, the letter stated the temperatures were falling below zero degrees at night and residents had limited amounts of wood.

Department of Emergency Management took the lead in delivering services to To'Hajiilee Chapter. They coordinated with the local chapter Emergency Response Team and Navajo Nation divisions to assist in identifying high-risk patients, medical risk patients, wheel chair bound patients, other elders and families.

Navajo Division of Transportation responded with about 8 cords of wood delivered to the community, as well as graders to clear muddy roads.

But the response didn't end there, last week on Jan. 5, President Shelly authorized another delivery of 25 cords of firewood for the community to help keep residents warm, as some residents are still battling muddy roads.

"We are making sure that we are continuing to monitor the conditions of all the Navajo Nation communities. I appreciate the departments and divisions working together to take care of our Navajo people," President Shelly said.

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