



Office of
Jason Crowell State
Senator

The Crowell Connection



Senator Jason Crowell – Serving Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.

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Recovery Begins for Southeast Missouri Communities



Last week, we in Southeast Missouri were hit by severe winter weather causing power outages and damage to homes and businesses. While electric companies brought in crews from other areas and worked hard to restore power, the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) worked to coordinate state efforts. Two State of Emergency Executive Orders were quickly signed by Governor Blunt on February 12th. These executive orders made it possible to open the State Emergency Operations Center, allow state resources to assist local jurisdictions, and activate the Missouri National Guard to state disaster duty. However, it was the combination of state help and the dedicated response of volunteers in the community that made the beginning of recovery efforts possible.

While thousands in our community were without power, state agencies were rushing to help those in need. The Missouri State Highway Patrol's troopers worked to patrol the roadways and respond to accidents caused by icy road conditions. At the same time the Missouri Department of Transportation cleared state roads and worked to make secondary roads passable for emergency vehicles. Two crews from the Department of Conservation came to Bollinger County to move debris off of gravel roads in the county.



The Department of Health and Senior Services kept in contact with long-term care providers to make sure these facilities had power or access to generators.

Another group that made an important difference in efforts in Southeast Missouri was the National Guard. There were 30 citizen-soldiers mobilized to the area to help residents recover from the storms. The soldiers began their support mission by conducting door-to-door wellness checks in Bollinger and Cape Girardeau counties. Each and every soldier that came to Southeast Missouri to help the individuals and families in distress deserves our deepest appreciation. These brave men and women dedicate their lives to protecting our communities, and this instance was a great example of their dedication to keeping Missourians safe.



The storm left many in the cold, but our community worked together to make sure that shelter was available to those who needed it. In Cape Girardeau County, there were six warming centers open during the day and two overnight shelters while Bollinger County had two shelters open. These centers were aided by the Department of Social Services, which worked with the

American Red Cross and the Salvation Army to make sure everyone in the community had a warm place to stay. However, it was the work of the volunteers that kept these shelters open, and it is the continuing commitment of those in our community that will help the recovery effort be successful.

Now is a time to rebuild, and many people have inquired about federal aid that could help get Southeast Missouri back to normal as soon as possible. A Presidential Disaster Declaration may be awarded if a disaster causes damage that is widespread (over several counties) and exceeds \$6 million in uninsured damages but only after requested by the Governor. Disaster assistance to cover uninsured damage may come in the form of Individual Assistance (grants or loans for individuals and businesses), Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance (low interest loans for individuals and businesses), and Public Assistance (local governments and non-profit organizations). Three joint federal, state and local damage assessment teams will soon begin canvassing Southeast Missouri to collect information on storm damages. These damage assessment teams will begin meeting with county and local

officials to collect information regarding uninsured damages and economic losses, including costs associated with emergency protective actions, debris removal estimated costs, and damages to public infrastructure.

The service, compassion and attention of individuals, businesses, and cities and counties is now focused on the clean-up process. Many will spend the next several weeks clearing out debris and assessing any damages to their property. I am confident that our community is strong and that we will work together to make sure that Southeast Missouri fully recovers from this disastrous event.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at: jcrowell@senate.mo.gov or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com>.

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