

FEMA Region I: February 2011 Winter Storms Activation

After Action Report

Summary: New England experienced back to back snow and freezing rain storms resulting in ESF11 being activated to the FEMA Region I RRCC on February 02, 2011. There was significant snowfall in January which led to concerns about power outages and roof collapses from these two storm systems. The area received less snow totals than predicted but freezing rain added weight to existing snow on roofs. Massachusetts and Connecticut had nearly 100 roof collapses each. Both states experienced increasing numbers of barn collapses, which required animal rescue teams to assist trapped animals. New England states were able to manage all situations at the local level and did not request assistance from federal partners.

What Worked Well: USDA Food and Nutrition Service North East Regional Office (FNS NERO) staff provided USDA Foods inventories for all New England states upon being notified of FEMA's Alert Order. This is greatly appreciated by FEMA Mass Care and American Red Cross to develop feeding plans. FNS NERO's proactive posture is also recognized at the National level.

ESF11 coordinated with APHIS Veterinary Services New England Area Veterinarian in Charge (AVIC) for situational awareness and monitoring for resource requests.

Areas for Improvement: VPN Connectivity was exceptionally slow due to system wide problems. It resulted in quadruple the amount of time to complete even routine tasks (ie. sending a brief email, opening a small attachment). Additionally, I kept getting "unable to send" messages while trying to email from my Blackberry. During most emergency deployments, I experienced IT challenges which none of my federal partners encounter.