



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Burchett reaches out to Gov. Haslam on flood relief

Process underway in hopes of getting disaster assistance

Knoxville, Tenn. — Knox County Mayor Tim Burchett today reached out to Gov. Bill Haslam in order to urge him to expedite the process that could lead to emergency financial assistance for Knox County residents and businesses suffering from flood damage following recent rains.

“I talked to Governor Haslam this afternoon and explained that the need for emergency assistance for our citizens and business owners is significant, and I asked that he do everything in his power to expedite the process to determine whether local damage warrants a disaster declaration,” Mayor Burchett said. “Governor Haslam was very receptive, and assured me that he is working hard to get the assistance that we hope will be made available to those who need it.”

Federal Emergency Management Agency and Small Business Association personnel completed a visit to Knox County yesterday as part of their preliminary assessment of reported flood damage. The information they gathered will be used to determine whether enough damage exists to approve a disaster declaration, should Gov. Haslam choose to request one.

If approved, assistance would likely come in the form of low-interest loans that would allow qualifying home owners, renters and businesses to fund their respective repairs.

"The initial damage assessment conducted by the Knoxville-Knox County Emergency Management Agency indicated an estimated loss of just under \$2 million from more than 200 homes and businesses," Knoxville-Knox County Emergency Management Agency Director Alan Lawson said.

Lawson says the list of damaged homes was generated from calls to the 311 center seeking an assessment, which was necessary in order to get FEMA and SBA to come to Knox County to conduct their own evaluation. He says it will likely be a few days before officials are certain whether Knox County qualifies for the aid.

“It’s important that we get people and businesses back on their feet so they can get their lives back to normal,” Mayor Burchett said.

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