

CALHOUN COUNTY

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR/CONTROLLER

“Building a Better County Through Responsive Leadership”

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- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

June 2, 2011

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Disaster Debris Removal Becoming Focus

Four days after the May 29 storm that swept through Calhoun County, the top priority in this disaster response is still ensuring the public's safety, health and welfare. Public Safety officials are maintaining higher levels of security for homes and businesses as power outages continue. Hundreds of crews are still working around the clock to get all roadways cleared during this emergency response phase. But with Consumers Energy expecting the remaining 6,300 Calhoun County customers without power to have electricity back by tonight, the focus is shifting quickly toward debris removal. Downed trees and other debris remain a serious public safety issue, contributing to decisions to close several schools again today, keeping thousands of students home as the end of the school year nears. Clearing and removing disaster debris is a major part of the recovery effort.

Hundreds of personnel are on the scene, with additional state personnel deployed today from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the Department of Corrections. Their efforts are a result of the Governor's Disaster Declaration issued earlier this week, intended to boost local disaster relief efforts. A Unified Command Structure led by Emergency Management Services officials from the State Police Homeland Security Division, Calhoun County, the City of Battle Creek, and Emmett Township is constantly assessing response needs and updating operating plans.

The Red Cross has announced a change in the local shelter location to 14600 Beadle Lake Road in Emmett Township. Residents are reminded to call 911 for emergencies, and 211 for help with non-emergency needs related to the recent storm. Battle Creek city officials also remind residents that weather emergency sirens will undergo normal monthly testing this Saturday, June 4.

The latest estimates show that the number of affected, damaged and destroyed properties have doubled from initial estimates, now totaling over 900 throughout the county. Damage Assessment--gathering information about the extent of public and private property damage including the number of downed trees and debris removal needed—is ongoing and is vital in our efforts to continue to seek resources that may be available from the state and other sources.

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Debris Removal Guidelines

In Battle Creek, non-construction storm debris will be picked up by the City and Waste Management. Residents should separate trees debris into 2 piles behind the sidewalk (behind the curb in areas with no sidewalk), one for debris 2" in diameter and smaller, the other for larger debris. Pick up will occur over the next several weeks. Smaller debris that are bundled and tied in 4' lengths will be picked up by Waste Management as part of weekly garbage pickup. Residents who wish to dispose of debris more quickly can haul their tree debris for disposal to the City's composting facility at Brice Pit on River Road beginning Monday from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

In addition, beginning on May 29, 2011 through June 10, 2011, the Community Compost Center located at 19646 Division Drive (just outside of the City of Marshall) will be open 24 hours a day to assist residents with the cleanup of trees and other yard waste.

Logs larger than 12" in diameter should be placed in a separate pile and with limbs cut to lengths less than 8 feet. No construction waste, shingles or other debris will be accepted. The Compost Center is for YARD WASTE ONLY. The Compost Center is open to assist Calhoun County residents only and is not intended for commercial business use.

The Community Compost Center is a partnership between Calhoun County, Calhoun County Road Commission and Board of Public Works, Solid Waste Management Fund and the City of Marshall. If residents need additional information or need directions to the center, please call 269-781-9841, extension 241 or visit the website at <http://calhouncountyrecycling.com/composting/>.

Kelli Scott - Calhoun County Administrator/Controller
Art Kale - Calhoun County Board Chairman

Ken Tsuchiyama - Battle Creek City Manager
Susan Baldwin - Battle Creek City Mayor

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