

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

March 4 2008 TORNADOES SITUATION REPORT # 10

24 March 2008, 1400 Hours

New information is in BOLD ITALICS.

SUMMARY

In the early evening hours of March 4 a cold front moving across the Commonwealth generated storm activity. These storms produced rain, wind and reported tornadoes. National Weather Service Morristown confirmed that an EF1 Tornado did touch down in Big Stone Gap, Wise County Virginia. Preliminary damage reports have been received from several jurisdictions and state agencies. No injuries or deaths were reported.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation: The Virginia VEOC is at Recovery Operations with limited staffing.

State of Emergency: Governor Kaine declared a State of Emergency at 1119 hours 5 March 2008.

Federal Declaration: No declaration has been requested at this time.

Protective Actions: Local Emergency Declared by:
Wise County at 1800 hours 4 March 2008
Town of Big Stone Gap at 1700 hours 4 March 2008
Essex County at 0800 hours 5 March 2008

WEATHER

Forecast: Monday 24 March: *A 40 percent chance of snow showers. Mostly cloudy, with a high near 40. North wind around 10 mph. Total daytime snow accumulation of less than one inch possible.* Monday night: *Partly cloudy, with a low around 24. North wind between 5 and 10 mph becoming calm.* Tuesday 25 March: *Mostly sunny, with a high near 58. Southwest wind between 5 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.* Tuesday night: *Partly cloudy, with a low around 33. Southwest wind around 10 mph.*

OPERATIONS SECTION

ESF 5 – Emergency Management: Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
Event created in WebEOC “2008-03 Tornadoes 03-04-08”. VDEM and localities posting event related information and resource requests in WebEOC. VDEM is monitoring recovery operations.

Local Liaison: VDEM Region 4 Coordinator returned to the Town of Big Stone Gap on 14 March to assist local officials in recovery efforts and enhance situational awareness and remains available to assist if needed.

INFRASTRUCTURE BRANCH

ESF 1 – Transportation: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Agency responded to request on 4 March for signage from Wise County. VDOT provided 2 front end loaders, 2 dump trucks, transportation, chainsaws and safety equipment to support Department of Correction personnel in debris removal in Big Stone Gap. ***VDOT signs were demobilized on 10 March and additional VDOT resources and crews demobilized on 17 March.***

LOGISTICS SECTION

ESF 7 – Resource Support: Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

3 requests for assistance were cancelled. A total of 9 requests have been completed. All State resources demobilized at the COB 17 March.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

Provided 2 – 10 inmate work crews to assist in debris removal in the Town of Big Stone Gap. **VDOC resources demobilized on 17 March.**

ESF 17 – Volunteers and Donations:

Virginia Volunteers Active in Disasters (VA-VOAD)

VA-VOAD representatives were on scene 14 March evaluating resource needs for the Town of Big Stone Gap. VA Southern Baptist Disaster Relief Officials met with Big Stone Gap Officials 17 March to initiate an action plan to assist in continued recovery efforts. Students from a local college may assist in the debris removal. **Local VA-VOAD organizations including the Bristol Chapter, American Red Cross, Virginia Baptist Mission Board, Lutheran Disaster Relief – Virginia, and the United Methodist Church – Virginia continue to support Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap in their recovery efforts.**

PLANNING SECTION

Situation Unit:

Preparing weekly Situation Reports, monitoring WebEOC entries and maintaining situational awareness. **Next Situation Report will be issued Monday, 31 March 2008 at 1400 hours.**

ESF 14 – Recovery:

VDEM staff is in contact with Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap officials to facilitate Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA) damage assessments.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Wise County:

Reported 6 houses destroyed, 15 with major damage, and 25 with moderate or lesser damage. Wise County declared a local emergency and their EOC is open on a limited schedule, 8am until 5pm, with limited staffing and has been in contact with VDEM Recovery and Mitigation personnel. Local Social Services contacted to begin setting up meetings to assist residents in need. Initial damage assessment received from Wise County on 13 March. The Town of Big Stone Gap Incident Command Post relocated to the local police station on 14 March. Wise County reported over 100 truck loads of debris has been removed from the impacted area and relocated to a local quarry. This debris will be either burned or taken to a county land fill for permanent disposal. **The Town of Big Stone Gap submitted a Notice of Interest in Applying for Commonwealth Emergency Relief 19 March 2008 estimating total eligible costs of \$2.5 - \$3 million.**

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