

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

March 4 2008 TORNADOES

SITUATION REPORT # 8

14 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: Friday 14 March: *SW Virginia; Mostly Cloudy, 70% chance of showers with thunderstorms possible after 2 PM; high near 63; southwest winds 10-15 Mph. Friday Night: Mostly cloudy; 70% chance of showers and thunderstorms; low around 40; west winds 5-15 MPH with gusts up to 20 Mph. Saturday 15 March: Cloudy; 90% chance of showers and thunderstorms; high near 59; east winds 5-10 Mph. Saturday night: Cloudy; 80% chance of showers and thunderstorms; low near 34; north winds 5-10 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. *The VEOC conducted a conference call on the 12th and 14th of March at 1130 Hours with the Town of Big Stone Gap, Wise County, VDOT and VDEM Officials to update current response activities and facilitate recovery efforts.*

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.*

INFRASTRUCTURE BRANCH

ESF 1 – Transportation: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Agency responded to request on 4 March for signage from Wise County. The VDOT is providing 2 front end loaders, 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.

LOGISTICS SECTION

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

3 requests for assistance were cancelled. 4 requests have been completed. 4 requests are currently in progress.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

Providing 2 – 10 inmate work crews to assist in debris removal in the Town of Big Stone Gap.

ESF 17 – Volunteers and Donations:

Virginia Volunteers Active in Disasters (VA-VOAD)

VA-VOAD representatives are on scene 14 March evaluating resource needs for the Town of Big Stone Gap.

PLANNING SECTION

Situation Unit:

Preparing daily Situation Reports, monitoring WebEOC entries and maintaining situational awareness. ***Next Situation Report will be issued Monday, 17 March 2008 at 1400 hours.***

GIS/Mapping Unit:

Providing maps and graphics as requested to support recovery operations and situational awareness.

ESF 14 – Recovery:

VDEM staff is in contact with Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap officials to facilitate individual (IDA) and public (IPA) damage assessments.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Wise County:

Reports 6 houses destroyed, 15 with major damage, 25 with moderate or lesser damage. EOC is open and local emergency declared. Red Cross located at the Mountain Empire Older Citizen facility is providing feeding and other services to citizens. Regional Assistance Development Authority contacted the Wise County EOC to request an area to set up for assisting the noninsured and renters who suffered loss from the tornado. Wise EOC has been in contact with VDEM PA 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. Wise County EOC is operational from 8am until 5pm with limited staffing effective 14 March. The Town of Big Stone Gap incident command post (ICP) has relocated to the local police station effective 14 March.***

Essex County:

9 residences were damaged, 7 moderate, 1 major and 1 most likely destroyed. Essex Vol. Fire Dept. had roof damage of \$30,000 and Essex High School had \$50,000 damage to roof and bleachers. Two businesses, South Tech (\$10,000) and Tappahannock Vet Hospital (\$10,000) sustained damage.

Westmoreland County:

Reports 3 agricultural barns destroyed, 2 agricultural barns with damage and 1 fire station damaged but still operational.

Goochland County

Two businesses were damaged. Total damage estimates are less than \$100,000.

Louisa County

Damage to 4 structures was reported with one destroyed. Damage assessment is being conducted. No State resources have been requested.