

May 12, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emergency Management Crews Complete Preliminary Damage Assessments

Kalamazoo County Emergency Management teams have completed the preliminary damage assessment surveys required by FEMA to be considered for federal assistance. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, crews traveled the path of the tornado that took place the evening of Tuesday, May 7th. Crews surveyed residential and commercial structures to classify them in four damage assessment categories: affected, minor, major, and destroyed. The classifications are preliminary and based generally on the level of damage to the structure and the ability to repair the structure so it can be habitable again.

Mike Corfman, the Kalamazoo County Emergency Management Director, expressed his gratitude for the response and cooperation of area residents in allowing access to their properties. "This is a traumatic event and a stressful time for many and allowing us to interrupt their personal recovery efforts to begin our collective recovery as a community is greatly appreciated", Corfman said.

These preliminary damage assessment numbers were forwarded up to the State Emergency Operations Center for review by the FEMA Region 5 representative for Michigan.

FEMA has made the decision, based on this preliminary damage assessment, to send crews to the southwest Michigan region to assess damage in Kalamazoo, Cass, St. Joseph, and Branch counties. They will arrive Tuesday for preliminary planning meetings and will be out in the neighborhoods beginning on Wednesday to complete a more in-depth damage assessment in order to place monetary figures on the overall storm damage. These figures will determine if a federal disaster declaration will be made. Survey crews will be easily identified with FEMA vest, FEMA ID, and they will be escorted by Kalamazoo County and Portage officials.

Preliminary damage assessment figures from Kalamazoo County Emergency Management crews in Texas Township, City of Portage, and Pavilion Township yielded the following numbers:

Destroyed (the majority of the structure is beyond repair) – 25 single family homes, 8 multi-family buildings, 24 mobile homes, 3 business structures (with multiple tenants).

Major damage (will require extensive repairs or demolition) – 80 single family homes, 11 multi-family buildings, 27 mobile homes, 10 business structures (multiple tenants), 1 non-profit organization structure.

Minor damage (would be able to be repaired) – 75 single family homes, 24 multi-family buildings, 54 mobile homes, 5 business structures (multiple tenants), 1 non-profit organization structure.

Many other structures were classified in the Affected category (storm damage noticed but very easily repaired) and those numbers totaled over 250.

The preliminary numbers cited above are likely to change, based on FEMA's efforts and as additional information becomes available.

More information on the damage assessment process can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/how-declared/preliminary-damage-assessments>

###

Andrew M. Alspach, PEM CPP
Planner, Public Information Officer
Kalamazoo County Emergency Management
Kalamazoo County Sheriff's Office
1500 Lamont Avenue Kalamazoo, MI 49048
Phone: 269-383-8743 Fax: 269-383-8791
Desk: 269-383-8740 Cell: 269-203-6933