

**EXECUTIVE ORDER
2020-61**

Declaring a State of Emergency Due to Severe Weather

WHEREAS, as of September 8, 2020, a State of Emergency exists in Utah due to severe weather conditions and unseasonably cold temperatures typical of late October, with sustained winds of 50 to 75 mph in Northern Utah, including wind gusts in excess of 85 mph in Davis County;

WHEREAS, strong, gusty downslope/canyon winds also impacted the Uinta Basin, Castle Country, the canyons of Washington County, and parts of Western Utah, including the San Rafael Swell;

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service (NWS) issued high wind warnings, wind advisories, and winter weather advisories, with hard freeze watches in the higher elevations of Northern Utah and expected light snow as an arctic cold front moves across the region;

WHEREAS, the NWS forecasts high winds in Davis County, Salt Lake County, and Weber County from Tuesday evening into Wednesday morning;

WHEREAS, the ongoing severe weather event has caused significant damage in multiple counties in Utah, including downed trees, widespread power outages, utility water breaks, gas leaks, damage to homes and vehicles, and wind- and debris-impacted roadways;

WHEREAS, the conditions have led to 2,524 power outages affecting over 180,000 customers, as well as internet outages across multiple counties, with some outages expected to last 2 or 3 days;

WHEREAS, the Utah Department of Transportation has restricted high profile vehicles in Weber County, Davis County, and Box Elder County, and has reported more than 45 overturned vehicles and that roadways have been impacted by storm debris;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 testing centers, Mass Transit TRAX service, and several schools have been suspended due to the severe weather impacts, including school cancelations in Davis, Ogden, and Salt Lake School Districts, and a two hour delay in Cache School District;

WHEREAS, impacts from the severe weather event are a threat to public safety;

WHEREAS, many of the communities affected by the severe weather event are also responding to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, the March 2020 Magna Earthquake, and ongoing floods and wildfires, limiting resources;

WHEREAS, numerous local communities have declared local states of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Magna Earthquake, and ongoing wildfires, and are now declaring local states of emergencies for the severe weather event, and have requested resources and support from State departments and agencies to assist them in addressing these emergencies;

WHEREAS, the Utah Division of Emergency Management has activated the State Emergency Operations Center to Level 1 and resources have been deployed;

WHEREAS, declaring a state of emergency will facilitate the protection of persons and property from the impacts of the severe weather event and expedite the use of state level resources, as well as the deployment of federal and interstate resources, if required;

WHEREAS, the declaration of emergency will also permit the State to request and receive mutual aid assistance from other states through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, if required;

WHEREAS, under the provisions of the Disaster Response and Recovery Act found in Title 53, Chapter 2a of the Utah Code Annotated 1953, as amended, I find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist in the State of Utah due to the severe weather event;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Gary R. Herbert, Governor of the State of Utah, declare a statewide "State of Emergency" due to the aforesaid circumstances requiring aid, assistance, and relief available from State resources and hereby order:

1. the continued execution of the State Emergency Operations Plan;
2. assistance from State government to political subdivisions as needed;
3. coordination with local authorities and the private sector to maximize response and recovery; and
4. the Division of Emergency Management to ensure adequate state staffing to expedite disaster response and recovery efforts.

This State of Emergency is declared and effective immediately and shall remain in effect until I find the threat or danger has passed or the disaster reduced to the extent that emergency conditions no longer exist.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Utah. Done in Salt Lake City, Utah, on this, the 9th day of September, 2020.

(State Seal)

**Gary R. Herbert
Governor**

ATTEST:

Spencer J. Cox
Lieutenant Governor

2020/061/EO