

Subject: Outreach to Townships with impacted community members
(Benzie County State of Emergency regarding April flooding)

Date: April 27, 2026

From: Rebecca S. Hubers

Hello,

To: Local Community Officials

Cc: Fire Chiefs and Benzie County Board of Commissioners

I am hoping we've had the opportunity to meet prior to a state of emergency. If not, I am the Emergency Management Coordinator for Benzie County.

Unfortunately, over the last week I have met with some of your community members under devastating circumstances.

In a previous sent correspondence, I noted that Benzie County issued a local declaration of emergency and is now included in the State declaration for severe storms and flooding since April 14, 2026.

Under a state of emergency during our recovery phase, it is important for damage assessment to occur. Assessing the level of damage in our jurisdiction, puts "numbers" to the local impact and we report those numbers up to see if a threshold can be met to reach FEMA and to possibly qualify for funding assistance. Meeting the threshold does not guarantee the availability of funding, but collecting the data that contributes to assessing the true impact of the event does not cost us anything, so why not *try*.

There are two types of assistance – Public (covering public infrastructure) and Individual (covering private homeowners and businesses).

The Benzie County OEM is currently working with many of your community residents on preliminary damage assessment via self-survey for individual damage assessment of their homes impacted by "flood waters" and extensive rain. Many were not in a direct route of a flooding body of water, but the spring melt/runoff and heavy precipitation events impacted nearby wetlands and water tables placing standing and

moving water in areas normally found dry. The heavily saturated soil has caused hydrostatic pressure events in many homes, forcing water through cracks, porous concrete, or mortar joints and flooding basements (some with essential living spaces) and crawl spaces. Many families have damaged personal belongings and internal structures (drywall, paneling, carpet, pumps, and furniture). In many cases you can't see this damage from the outside. So, it is important that if homeowners want their damage to be assessed that they complete the self-report survey OR contact me at the Office of Emergency Management and I can help them. The information for the self-survey is below. Information links can also be found on the Emergency Management webpage at www.benzieco.gov/eoc

Self-Reporting Survey: <https://arccg.is/10ab1j>

Or, below I've provided the QR code if someone needs to embed it on a page.



I am also communicating your local clean up days (if available) to the homeowners I meet, as the most efficient (and hopefully cost effective) opportunity to assist them with personal debris management. My hope is that, if possible, you consider grace to families bringing items they probably had no previous intention of disposing of, but now need to as a way remediate any further health and property damage (such as with mold).

Please reach out if you have questions – I will try to find answers.

Thank you for all that you do.

Rebecca S. Hubers

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