STATE OF COLORADO

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Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to a Severe Spring Snowstorm

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, §§ 24-32-2100, *et seq.*, C.R.S. I, Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor of the State of Colorado, issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency due to a severe Spring snowstorm.

I. Background and Purpose

Starting on Friday, April 17, 2009, a Spring snowstorm hit Colorado, dumping up to four feet of snow up and down the Front Range and in the high country. Major highways, including Interstate 70 between Vail and Golden, were shut down. Hundreds of motorists were stranded and in need of temporary shelter. The Colorado State Patrol, CDOT, and local law enforcement worked to rescue motorists and take them to emergency shelters.

As Governor, I am responsible for meeting the dangers to the state and people presented by disasters. The Colorado Disaster Emergency Act (hereinafter the "Act"), defines a disaster as "the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damages, injury or loss of life or property resulting from any natural cause or cause of human origin, including but not limited to . . . storm." C.R.S. § 24-32-2103(1.5). As detailed in this Order, this Spring snowstorm posed an imminent danger to human life and property and, therefore, constituted a disaster for the purposes of the Act.

In response to this disaster, shortly after midnight on Saturday, April 18th I declared a disaster emergency and activated certain elements of the Colorado National Guard to assist with the disaster emergency response effort. Specifically, I authorized the activation of National Guard troops to deliver supplies to emergency shelters housing those stranded by the storm.

II. Directives

A. I hereby declare that this snowstorm constituted a disaster emergency for purposes of C.R.S. § 24-32-2103. My verbal disaster emergency declaration on April 18, 2009, is hereby memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if it were contained within this Executive Order.

B. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2104(6) and § 28-3-104, as commander-in-chief of military forces, I hereby employ and call to active duty certain elements of the Colorado National Guard as may be necessary to respond to this disaster, and delegate command authority to the Adjutant General of the Colorado Department of Military. I order the Adjutant General of the Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Director of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management to coordinate activities between their respective department and division as necessary to respond to this disaster emergency and execute the directives contained in this Executive Order.

C. I further order the encumbrance of up to $15,000 from the Disaster Emergency Fund to pay for the response effort related to this disaster. The Director of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management is hereby authorized and directed to allocate the funding to the appropriate agencies. These funds shall remain available for this purpose for three months from the date of this Executive Order, and any unexpended funds shall remain in the Disaster Emergency Fund.

III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire one day from its date of signature unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in paragraph II(C) above shall remain available for the described purposes for three months from the date of this Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado this twenty-first day of April, 2009.

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor