



— State of —
North Dakota

Office of the Governor

Doug Burgum
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2019-02

WHEREAS, a winter storm emergency exists for the Counties of Foster, Grant, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McIntosh, McLean, Nelson, Steele, Towner, and Wells, and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, resulting in life-threatening conditions, excessive snow removal costs, and widespread infrastructure damages; and,

WHEREAS, North Dakota experienced a persistent pattern of snowstorms this winter, resulting in strong winds and extended periods of wind chills as low as 60 below, prompting the National Weather Service to issue multiple advisories, watches and warnings, and the N.D. Highway Patrol and the N.D. Department of Transportation to alert the public to dangerous driving conditions and highway closures; and,

WHEREAS, severe winter weather and a blizzard March 13-15, 2019, brought more than 12 inches of heavy, wet snow across affected areas of the state, previously impacted by significant accumulations of heavy snowfall this winter; and,

WHEREAS, a fatality occurring during the March 13-15, 2019, storm blocked roads, prevented a timely response, delayed rescue operations of stranded motorists as well as removal of abandoned vehicles, and required extensive efforts by public works and crews and private contractors to clear highways of heavy snow and drifts; and,

WHEREAS, snow-blocked, icy roads impeded emergency response teams, placing the lives of residents and first responders at risk, isolating rural residents for several days, and resulting in multiple accidents, several in which school buses slid into ditches, requiring rescue operations of children and their drivers; and,

WHEREAS, heavy snowfall caused structural damage to homes, public buildings and infrastructure, and disrupted postal service, commerce and ranching operations during calving season; and,

WHEREAS, local jurisdictions rapidly depleted snow removal and emergency fund budgets as road crews struggled to clear arterial roads only to have high winds create drifts that required operators to return hours later, further delaying work on secondary routes; and,

WHEREAS, local officials are concerned that decreases in funding levels will present serious challenges for financing anticipated flood-fighting operations; and,

WHEREAS, the N.D. Highway Patrol, the N.D. Department of Transportation, N.D. Department of Human Services, N.D. Department of Health, the N.D. Department of Emergency Services and other state agencies worked together to support local response and recovery efforts; and,

WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the state to assist the people of North Dakota in addressing the emergencies, disasters, and other hardships that may face the state and its citizens.

NOW THEREFORE, Doug Burgum, Governor of North Dakota, by virtue of the authority set forth in Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution and Chapter 37.1, North Dakota Century Code, hereby orders activation of the North Dakota State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) in order to assist local and tribal officials, alleviate hardships, implement appropriate response and recovery actions and future mitigation measures, and facilitate restoration of services and infrastructure. All state agencies shall maintain high readiness levels of severe winter weather response resources and capabilities in preparation for timely execution of their respective responsibilities pursuant to the SEOP.

This order is issued pursuant to the following authority and for the following reasons:

1. The Governor is vested with the executive authority pursuant to Article V, Section 1 of the North Dakota Constitution; and,
2. The Governor is vested with statutory authority to issue executive orders to minimize or avert the effects of a disaster or emergency pursuant to Chapter 37-17.1 of the North Dakota Century Code; and,
3. The Governor is vested with statutory authority under North Dakota Century Code Chapter 39-12-23 to permit and prescribe definite excess limitations as to size and weight for the operation of motor vehicles in emergencies and to meet unusual conditions for the general welfare of the public; and
4. A coordinated and effective effort of all state departments is required to minimize the impact of disasters and emergencies in this state.



Doug Burgum
Governor

Attest:



Alvin A. Jaeger
Secretary of State

Jim Silrum
Deputy Secretary of State