



STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
COMMUNITY AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Office of the Commissioner

Sarah Palin, Governor
Emil Notti, Commissioner

For Immediate Release

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State Response Team Travels to Emmonak

January 20, 2009 (Juneau, Alaska) – Alaska State Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development Commissioner (DCCED), Emil Notti today dispatched a response team to Emmonak. The team, made up of representatives from the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, Department of Health and Social Services, Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development and Department of Labor and Workforce Development, was sent to the area to assess the city's economic situation.

The State of Alaska received a request for disaster declaration on January 14, 2009. Reports from Emmonak about the situation have been inconsistent and unfortunately the Mayor of Emmonak was unable to attend a teleconference last week with Governor Palin to describe the situation.

"After the situation assessment is complete we will brief Governor Palin, review available public resources and come up with a plan for directing those resources to the citizens of Emmonak who have asked for assistance," said Emil Notti. "This work will be done regardless of whether the situation meets the required statutory criteria of a disaster."

"We will also meet with community, tribal, ANCSA regional, and ANCSA village corporation leaders to explore if they can supplement the State's efforts with any additional resources for their members and shareholders," said Notti.

The response team will meet with as many citizens of Emmonak as possible to determine how widespread and severe a shortage of food and fuel is, what caused the shortages and the extent existing public "safety net" programs such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Heating Assistance Program (HAP) and other programs such as the bulk fuel loan program can mitigate or eliminate fuel shortages in a time of crisis.

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