***Update on the Illinois Tornados***

Governor Quinn Declares Seven Counties State Disaster Areas

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today declared seven counties state disaster areas after severe storms generating tornadoes and high winds ripped across Illinois. Hundreds of homes and businesses have been damaged or destroyed, hundreds of thousands of people are without power, and numerous roads throughout the state have been closed by fallen trees and downed power lines. At least six people are reported dead and dozens more injured.

Later today, Governor Quinn will inspect damage on the ground in some of Illinois’ hardest hit communities: Washington, Diamond, Gifford, Brookport and New Minden. Counties included in the Governor’s declaration are: Champaign, Grundy, LaSalle, Massac, Tazewell, Washington and Woodford counties.

“Yes yesterday Illinois was hit extremely hard by deadly tornadoes that left many in a great deal of pain and loss,” Governor Quinn said. “Although we are still receiving reports of massive damage to communities across our state, we want to make sure people are getting the assistance and resources they need as quickly as possible. As we pray for the families of those who have lost their lives and others who are injured, the state of Illinois will do everything necessary to help these communities recover.”

The state disaster declaration makes available a wide variety of state resources that can help affected communities respond and recover from the storms. The state of Illinois has personnel and assets that can be mobilized to help local government officials with disaster recovery, including such things as trucks, heavy equipment to remove debris, communications equipment and provide assistance with security and other public safety issues.

The State Incident Response Center (SIRC) in Springfield was activated Sunday afternoon and will remain operational as long as necessary. Liaisons from several state agencies are working with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) to coordinate the deployment of state personnel and assets to assist local governments in the affected areas.

The state has dispatched technical rescue teams to a number of impacted locations across the state, and provided emergency generators, light towers and communications systems.

As a reminder, if you would like to volunteer or offer assistance to survivors, please contact Lutheran Disaster Response at 847/635-4653. Do not show up and volunteer; you will be turned away. If you would like to send items, please refrain as well, you can offer a monetary donation to the survivors through Lutheran Social Services of Illinois or ELCA Disaster Response.

**Ways to Give**

Checks or money orders should be sent to:

**Lutheran Disaster Response Illinois**
LSSI
1001 E Touhy Ave Suite 50
Des Plaines, IL 60018

*or*

**Lutheran Disaster Response**
39330 Treasury Center
Chicago, IL 60694-9300

Write "IL Tornadoes" on your check memo line.