



The Navajo Nation  
Commission on Emergency Management



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 23, 2026**

**CONTACT:**  
**Marcarlo Roanhorse**  
**[marcarloroanhorse@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:marcarloroanhorse@navajo-nsn.gov)**

**Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management declares  
State of Emergency in response to severe winter weather**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** - On Friday, the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management (CEM) declared a State of Emergency for the Navajo Nation in response to severe winter weather conditions and anticipated impacts from snow accumulation, low temperatures, and hazardous road conditions.

"The safety of our people is our highest priority," said CEM Chair Marcarlo Roanhorse. "This emergency declaration allows the Navajo Nation to act quickly and in a coordinated manner to protect our communities, especially those in higher elevation and remote areas that are most vulnerable to winter storms."

The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Weather Advisory beginning Jan. 23 at 5:00 p.m. MST through Jan. 24, with moderate to heavy snowfall expected, particularly across the Chuska Mountains and Defiance Plateau. Forecasted conditions include snow accumulation, reduced visibility, and slick roadways, which may significantly impact travel, access to essential services, and public safety, especially in higher-elevation and rural communities.

The emergency declaration is intended to support preemptive and coordinated response efforts, ensure readiness across Navajo Nation departments and Chapters, and allow for the timely mobilization of resources to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Navajo Nation communities.

Navajo Nation leadership, Chapters, and emergency response partners are encouraged to:

- Monitor local conditions closely.
- Share weather and safety information with community members.
- Coordinate with the Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management regarding any impacts, needs, or damage assessments.

Community members are urged to use caution while traveling, prepare for winter conditions, and remain informed through official Navajo Nation communications and National Weather Service updates.

The Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management will continue to monitor conditions and provide updates as necessary.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council thanks emergency responders, Chapter officials, and community members for their cooperation and continued commitment to public safety.

###



# The Navajo Nation

## Commission on Emergency Management



Resolution No. CEM 26-001

### RESOLUTION OF THE NAVAJO NATION COMMISSION ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR THE NAVAJO NATION AND  
EMPHASIZING THE NEED FOR PREEMPTIVE MEASURES FROM CURRENT AND  
SUBSEQUENT IMPACTS OF SEVERE WINTER SNOW STORMS AND SNOW MELT  
CREATING POTENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS ACROSS THE NAVAJO  
NATION

#### WHEREAS:

1. The Navajo Nation Council established the Commission on Emergency Management. 2 N.N.C. §881. The Commission is authorized to assess, verify, recommend, and declare states of emergency with the concurrence of the Navajo Nation President. 2 N.N.C. §884 (B)(1).
2. The Commission in conjunction with the Department of Emergency Management is empowered to coordinate emergency and disaster relief services by Navajo Nation and non-tribal entities and to recommend and deploy appropriate resources regarding natural and man-made emergencies. 2 N.N.C. §883 (A) and (C).
3. The Commission on Emergency Management may seek assistance from federal, state, and other tribal governments, and local and private agencies to address emergency and disaster related situations. 2 N.N.C. §884 (B)(2).
4. Low freezing temperatures, snow accumulations of 2" or greater, and snow melt contribute to subsequent threats of freezing pipes, water request, and wood requests from the Navajo People; and,
5. Many Navajo Nation Chapters and communities within the Navajo Nation experience impacts from inclement winter weather conditions, particularly impacting residents living in isolated and remote locations of the Navajo Nation; and,
6. The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) continues to actively increase readiness levels, monitor winter weather threats capable of producing further damaging impacts, compiling incident reports, and collaborating with stakeholders to meet urgent public health and safety needs; and,
7. Any or all initial response(s) are first at the local level. However, communication and coordination are to be established for effective response(s), including completion of local assessments, surveys and incident reports, to continue evaluating impacts and determining types of resources necessary for deployment, and other types of assistance; and,

8. The National Weather Service has issued a Winter Weather Advisory effective January 23, 2026 at 5:00 PM MST through January 24, 2026 to 11:00 PM MST for the Chuska Mountains and Defiance Plateau, forecasting moderate to heavy snowfall, with the heaviest snowfall expected late Friday night through Saturday morning, including total snow accumulations of approximately two to six inches, and higher elevations such as Buffalo Pass potentially receiving eight to twelve inches of snow; and,
9. The National Weather Service advises that these conditions are expected to create slick and hazardous road conditions, particularly on bridges and overpasses, with reduced visibility and dangerous travel conditions anticipated, including impacts to communities such as Ganado and Window Rock, thereby increasing public health and safety risks across the Navajo Nation.
10. Due to potential impacts and substantial public health and safety from severe winter snow storms and subsequent mud conditions resulting from snow melt that creates potential public safety risks across the Navajo Nation, it is essential to ensure public health and safety issues are addressed through adequate assessments, establishment of priorities, communication, safety measures, coordination, and use of appropriate resources to mobilize relief efforts.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management declares a State of Emergency for the Navajo Nation due to severe winter weather conditions, and emphasizes the need for pre-emptive measures for current and subsequent impacts from snow melt that will pose potential public health and safety risks across the Navajo Nation; and
2. The needs of the Navajo Nation are to be addressed in a manner to provide the necessary resources required to address this declared State of Emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, activating available personnel, equipment, funding and other resources as may be required to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Navajo Nation and sustaining community infrastructure; and
3. Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management finds it necessary and crucial to address the needs of the Navajo Nation through adequate assessments, surveys, establishment of priorities, communications, safety measures, coordination, and use of appropriate resources to mobilize relief and mitigate further threats to human lives and safety, including planning for pre-emptive measures currently, and for the future; and
4. The Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management finds it necessary for responsible Navajo Nation entities to immediately begin and maintain coordination for use of resources to meet the needs of all communities; and
5. The Navajo Nation Department of Emergency Management shall provide a status report to the Commission on Emergency Management during the Commission's April 2026 meeting to determine the need to extend the declaration; and
6. The declaration of a State of Emergency shall automatically deactivate on April 30, 2026, unless extended by further action of the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management.

### CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the foregoing declaration was duly considered by the Navajo Nation Commission on Emergency Management in a duly called meeting at Window Rock, Navajo Nation (Arizona), at which a quorum was present and that same passed by a vote of 4 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstained, this 23rd day of January 2026.




Marcarlo Roanhorse, Chairperson  
**Commission on Emergency Management**

**Motion:** Shawna A. Claw

**Second:** Dariel Yazzie

**CONCURRENCE:**



Dr. Buu Nygren, President  
**The Navajo Nation**