

White Earth Emergency Management- Thunderstorm/Windstorm Response

Timeline

Friday 6.20.25

- Severe Thunderstorm, Hail, and Windstorms starting at 9:00pm created a mass power outage across White Earth Nation.
- Emergency Management issued code red alerts to the public regarding the severe weather.

Saturday 6.21.25

- Damage assessments and emergency response from White Earth Emergency Management (WEM) and White Earth Conservation officers started around 9:00am.
- Message sent to everyone email to call in request of service to white earth dispatch to help coordinate with WEN.
- Damage across all the villages with biggest impacts in Rice Lake and White Earth
- Generators were delivered to community members – with priority to elders and other individuals with medical needs
- Forestry Department went and assisted with tree removal.
- Ice coolers were delivered to those who requested ice to keep their medicines on ice.
- Cases of Water were delivered to Rice Lake Village Community Members at 6:00pm

Sunday 6.22.25

- Damage assessments and response efforts continued.
- Generators in Rice Lake gassed up- and assistance provided via house visit.
- Generators were picked up and redistributed from the communities who regained power to other homes who are still without power.
- WEM opened up the Rice Lake Community Center as a cooling shelter for community members to cool down, get water, snacks, and have a working restroom. From 12:00pm to 8:00pm
- Shooting Star Casino provided 100 cases of water and the White Earth (Naytahwaush) Food Shelf provided snacks.
- Tarps delivered to those who requested assistance for roof damage and leaks.
- WEM opened up an additional cooling center at the Twin Lakes Fire Hall from 3pm-8pm
- Storm shelter plans within the cooling shelter for the incoming weather are established.
- White Earth Community Center was opened 7am-12pm, and again from 6pm-10pm as a cooling center, and place to shower. It will open again Monday (6.23.25) at 7am.

White Earth Nation experienced a wide-spread power outage due to the severe weather storm. Emergency response efforts from White Earth Emergency Management (WEM) began on Saturday, June 21st. White Earth Dispatch opened a storm assistance hotline for urgent needs. Dispatch is coordinating and communicating needs to WEN. Generators were distributed to priority elders with medical needs, others with medical needs. Cases of water have been delivered to Rice Lake Village, and those who requested water for their families. On Sunday June 22nd the Rice Lake Community Center and Twin Lakes Fire Hall opened as cooling shelters for the community members to have power, AC, bathrooms, water and snacks. Efforts continued by updating requests and redistributing generators from homes who regained power overnight.

Many of the White Earth Nation RBC divisions have provided assistance and resources in the emergency response efforts. Here is a brief description from RBC Divisions regarding response, resource assistance, and availability:

The public safety division (White Earth Police Department) will remain the primary point of contact for receiving and relaying information. They are codeveloping and managing a Microsoft spreadsheet of dispatched calls from the storm hotline. The spreadsheet has allowed the Police Department, Emergency Management Center, and Natural Resources to organize incoming information, prioritize calls and situations, and ensure all departments are on the same page. It also provides real-time updates, making it possible to track calls from the moment they are received to the point they are resolved. This tool ensures community members are being helped efficiently and ensures no requests are unaddressed. The White Earth Police Department along with White Earth IT have established the non-police related call center number acting as the storm emergency hotline. Callers will be able to leave voicemails that dispatch will receive and forwarded to the appropriate department. The Police Department is also conducting welfare checks on individuals, monitoring and ensuring roadways are clear and safe for travel, and reporting power outages in various areas across the reservation. They will continue to serve as the central point of contact for coordinating efforts and facilitating communication among all departments and resources within the White Earth Nation. The Police Department will continue to handle all emergencies and 911 calls as usual.

Natural Resources staff is helping coordinate response, staffing the cooling shelters, tree removal and delivering generators and cases of water. Emergency Management staff have been taking lead on coordinating with dispatch to provide assistance to the community. They have been following weather patterns and issuing alerts. They have also been monitoring the power outages to provide service to the priority areas of concern.

White Earth Conservation has been on the ground delivering generators and water to community members across the reservation. They have been also coordinating requests of assistance.

Forestry has been tackling tree removal requests and will continue to address these concerns. Call dispatch on the storm assistance hotline (218)-983-3201 with urgent tree removal requests and they will provide assistance as best as they can. Priority will be given to elders and community members with critical needs.

The finance department has offered indirect support by making themselves available to facilitate credit card access, expedite purchase order approvals, and offer financial guidance.

Tribal health made a \$5,000 donation to human services to purchase recovery items. They also assisted with making bagged lunches for tenants of Round House and Congregate. They assisted with oxygen tank deliveries and checked in with in-home dialysis patients. White Earth Tribal Health will continue to assist those with healthcare needs and assist in any way they can.

Human Resources checked in with Bemidji residents to assess needs. They brought food to emergency management personnel. They will be posting a poster for employee assistance program services for employees to reach out to. Reach out with any concerns and they will try to assist the best they can.

Behavioral Health (BH) staff mobilized to support community members affected by power outages and extreme heat. WESA/ATR staff delivered water to individuals at Acute Care, where maintenance cleared the road to ensure access for emergency support. In Pinepoint, behavioral health staff collaborated with the community council to provide fans to elderly. CSOs supported water distribution efforts in Rice Lake and coordinated with other BH staff to gather emergency supplies such as flashlights and coolers. Generators were purchased for Oshki Manidoo, residential treatment facility in Bemidji, to ensure continuity of care and safety during outages.

White Earth Residential Programs specifically Oshki Manidoo had a great response from their maintenance staff who arrived on campus and assisted clearing debris and trees from areas to allow for better vehicle transport. Generators were purchased for the lodges along with portable AC units to allow for minimal power within the lodges. They offered the adult females the option to request a leave/pass if they had a safe place to go and explained that they would do their best to keep them comfortable, but if they chose to leave it would not affect their progress in the program. Acute care was brought generators and food on Sunday. They are taking members of Acute Care to dinner, so they are fed, and access to community showers. They are going to continue to operate as much as possible with client care and safety as the number one priority, and staff will focus on cleaning and providing minimal services with limited resources.

Human Services direct services and coordination involved helping Elders/Vulnerable Adult Programs by making contact with elders to assess needs, prioritizing elders with significant medical needs. The housing stabilization team assisted with hotel stays and meals for elders and people with significant medical needs. Constituents services team assisted with securing hotel stays. Mahnomen Family Shelter assisted with temporary shelter to singles and families. The Food shelf team assisted with the labor of obtaining air conditioners and providing snacks to emergency service workers and for the cooling centers. Future Services include financial services with SNAP EBT disaster food replacement. Must already be an existing SNAP recipient. If you have experienced a loss of your food- please contact Amy Littlewolf at (218)-935-3789 or Financial Services main line at (218)-935-2359 within 10 days of the power outage. An EBT affidavit will need to be completed and returned. Benefit replacement within 24 to 48 hours expected. The food shelf will have food boxes will be available to all Becker, Clearwater, and Mahnomen Residents in need. Extended hours are 7-3, M-F. Food Distribution- PENDING Resources. Regarding the replacement of cold food items, more details will be provided on Monday, June 23rd.

These efforts are Nationwide and greatly appreciated. We will continue to monitor the weather and the requests as they come in!