

THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Proclamation of Disaster Emergency

March 5, 1997

Whereas, investigations made at my direction have disclosed that a massive tire fire has occurred at the EZ Recycling facility in the City of Washington, on or about February 27, 1997, which has resulted in the release of large quantities of toxic pollutants into the atmosphere and onto the ground and has caused the evacuation of persons residing in the City of Washington and the closure of a nearby school; and

Whereas, the tire fire has the potential for causing additional damage and the loss of essential services to affected areas of Washington County as a result of possible water supply pollution and other long-term environmental impacts; and

Whereas, the tire fire and resulting pollution has by investigation been found to seriously affect the safety, health, and welfare of a substantial number of citizens of the Commonwealth, and has been of such magnitude or severity as to render essential the Commonwealth's supplementation of county and local efforts and resources;

Now, Therefore, pursuant to the provisions of Section 7301(c) of the Emergency Management Services Code (35 Pa.C.S.A. Section 7101 et seq.), I do hereby proclaim the existence of a disaster emergency in the affected areas of Washington County.

Further, I do hereby transfer unused appropriated funds to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency as deemed appropriate to meet the exigencies of the emergency. The aforementioned funds shall be utilized for disaster-related expenses incurred by various state agencies and departments as I shall direct. These funds shall be credited to a special account established by the Office of Budget; and

Further, I direct that the Secretaries of Environmental Protection and Health be prepared to conduct a damage assessment of the affected areas to determine the magnitude and severity of individual and public damage resulting from the tire fire and falling within the functional responsibilities of these departments. The overall state damage assessment will be coordinated by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to which individual departmental damage assessment data will be provided for possible further submission to federal or other appropriate authorities; and

Further, I direct that the emergency response and recovery aspects of the Commonwealth and all applicable county, municipal, and other plans be activated and that all state, county, and municipal actions taken to implement those plans be coordinated through the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency; and

Still Further, I do hereby urge the governing bodies and executive officers of all stricken subdivisions of the Commonwealth immediately to act as necessary to meet the current exigencies as legally authorized under this Proclamation, namely, by the employment of temporary workers, by the rental of equipment, and by entering into such contracts and agreements as may be required to meet the emergency, all without regard to those time-

consuming procedures and formalities normally prescribed by law, mandatory constitutional requirements excepted.

Given under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the city of Harrisburg, this fifth day of March in the year of our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven and of the Commonwealth, the two hundred and twenty-first.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Ridge". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

Governor

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