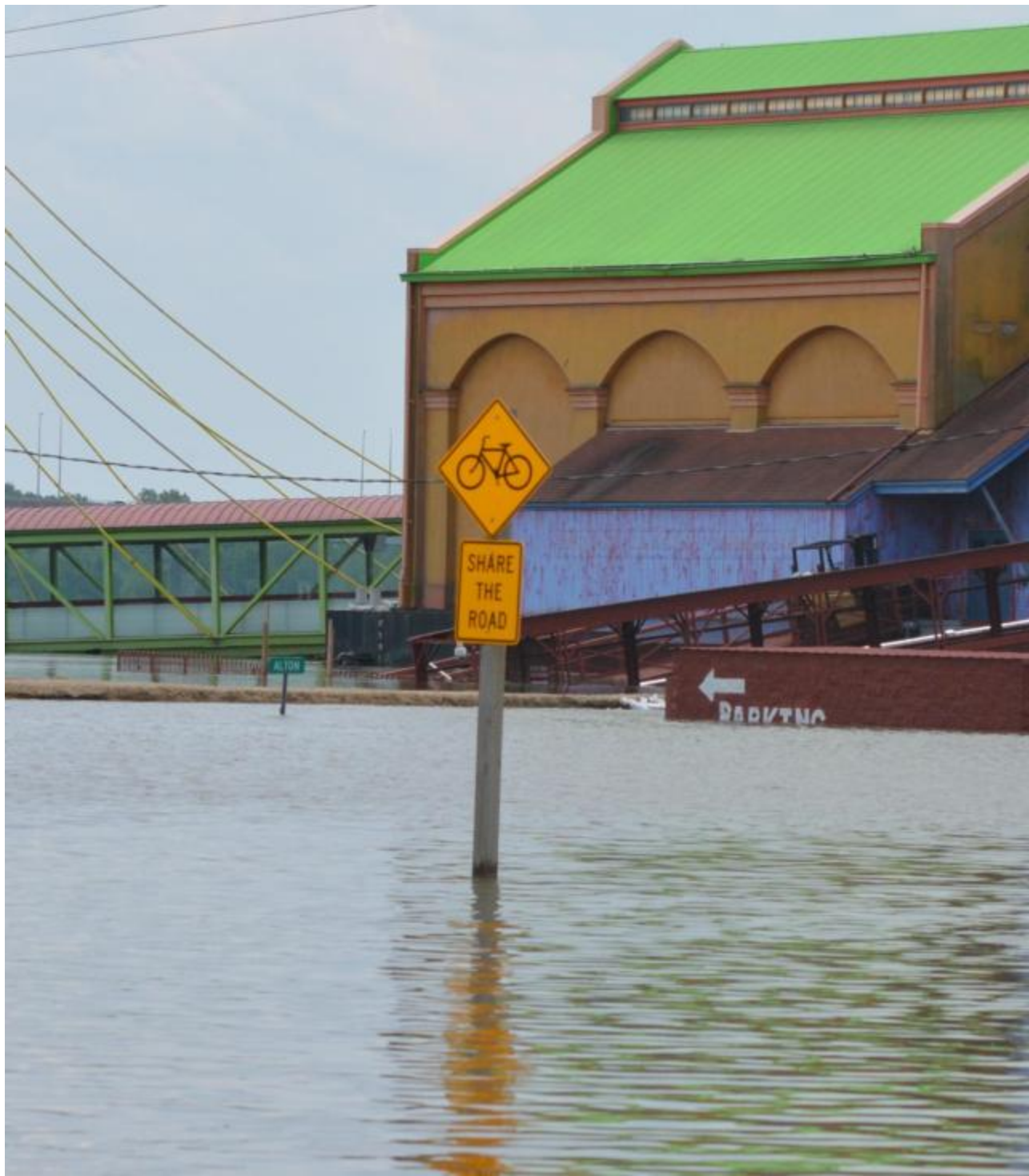




# **Gov. Pritzker Activates Illinois National Guard to Assist Madison County, Jersey, Calhoun, Other Neighboring Areas**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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SPRINGFIELD - Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker has activated the Illinois National Guard to assist Madison County and other neighboring areas in response to recent severe flooding.

Pritzker's office said a Thursday morning news conference is set at the Illinois Emergency Management Agency in Springfield with Adjutant General Richard Neely and others about the planned activation.

Madison County has been declared a disaster area and National Guard help was sought to aid in flood-fighting efforts by County Board Chairman Kurt Prenzler.

Chairman Prenzler signed a proclamation on Wednesday declaring Madison County a major disaster and is calling for the National Guard to aid in its flood fighting efforts.

“We’ve been vigilant this flood season and we do not want to take any chances,” Prenzler said.

Prenzler met with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau and requested assistance from the National Guard. The proclamation states that a disaster exists “due to record-breaking flooding along the Mississippi River throughout Madison County and the ongoing efforts to contain said flooding.”

Prenzler said he sent a letter to the governor requesting the National Guard be deployed to monitor the 44 miles of levees within the county. The river is expected to crest at 39.3 feet on Tuesday in Alton, just short of the 1993 record of 42.72.

“Even though our levee system is upgraded our intent is to have resources available so we can react quickly if need be,” Prenzler said. “We need to be prepared for the ‘what ifs’ and not the ‘what happened?’”

The Flood Prevention District of Southwest Illinois, with the help of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, made significant upgrades to the levees over the past decade.

Prenzler said that with the length and intensity of the flooding the county wants to do everything it can to make sure any potential issues with the levees are immediately spotted.

Prenzler thanked Tate-Nadeau for visiting this morning with officials from Alton, Metro East Sanitary District, Wood River Drainage and Levee District and Madison County.

“With the river rising day after day, we appreciated that she came down to meet with us and hear our concerns,” Prenzler said.

The governor signed a proclamation earlier this month, declaring 34 counties, including Madison, a disaster. The declaration makes a wide variety of state resources available and sets in motion the ability to receive federal assistance.

“Everyone is working hard to ensure public safety and protect the residents and businesses of the county,” Prenzler said.