

November 21, 2012

The Honorable Christopher Christie
Governor of the State Of New Jersey

Governor Christie,

There can be no doubt that Super Storm Sandy has caused great devastation along the Jersey Shore. Yet along the coast it is also evident that some areas are more severely damaged than others. The Borough of Lavallette is one community that miraculously did not suffer the structural damage that occurred both to the north and to the south.

As you may be aware, Lavallette is a unique community in that it possesses its own electric distribution system, water system, sanitary sewer system, Police Department, Fire Department, First Aid Squad and Elementary School. In addition, our Public Works Department maintains our own roads and beaches and provides regular garbage pickup. In short, we are a free standing community.

As of this date, all of our Borough functions are operational, and the status of each system is as follows:

1. Water System. Our wells remained functional throughout the storm. No loss of pressure occurred. All leaks have been stabilized. Our licensed operator has had the water quality tested on two occasions after the storm and our quality surpasses all state requirements.
2. Sanitary Sewer. All damage has been repaired or capped. The Ocean County Sewerage Authority has the substation located within the borough functioning at 100% capacity.
3. Electric Distribution System. The Lavallette substation was energized by J.C.P .& L. on November 10, 2012 at 5:05 PM. Lavallette began distribution to our customers immediately. Safety precautions were taken to insure that damaged structures were not energized. After inspection by licensed contractors, homes are being energized internally at a rate of approximately 50 to 75 per day.
4. Police Department. Our police officers remained on duty throughout the storm and the department is fully staffed and supplemented with additional part time officers conducting regular patrols.
5. Fire Department. All pumpers were removed from the island prior to the storm. Two pumpers have been returned to the borough and are fully functional and ready for service
6. First Aid Squad. All ambulances were removed prior to the storm. Two ambulances have been returned to the borough and are fully functional and ready for service.
7. School. Our elementary school suffered no damage whatsoever. The school is heated by electricity and is ready for use.

8. Public Works. All of our roadways are clear. Debris removal is ongoing. Dune restoration is approximately 60% complete. Garbage collection is occurring on a regularly scheduled basis.

In short, our community is ready to begin the process repopulating. My Emergency Management Coordinator/ Chief of Police has agreed that residents should be allowed to reside in their homes if they meet the criteria of having water, sewer and electricity, and Fire and EMS services are provided. He has assured me that he can maintain public safety and provide the necessary law enforcement functions. Our Fire Department and First Aid are capable of functioning when our volunteers return to their homes. These volunteers are eager to return and will be among the first to do so.

Dr. Peter Morris, our school superintendent, is eager to have the school children return to their regular classrooms so that the normal education process can begin. The school is clean and safe and ready for operation.

I am requesting that you provide this borough with the authority to determine when residents may return. This authority was given to other municipalities, including Point Pleasant Beach, where such authority was effectively deployed. The level of damage to neighboring communities should not be a hindrance to the recovery of the Borough of Lavallette.

I invite you to visit our community so that you may see for yourself the progress that has been made, but ask that you consider my request on an expedited basis.

Respectfully,



Walter G. LaCicero
Mayor, Borough of Lavallette