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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, September 19, 2007

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## **Disaster Unemployment Assistance Application Deadline Approaches**

### **Secretary Gassman Reminds Individuals in Vernon, Crawford, Richland, La Crosse & Sauk Counties to Apply by September 26**

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today reminded workers in Vernon, Crawford, Richland, La Crosse, and Sauk counties who lost their employment due to last month's flooding and severe storms that they must apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) by Wednesday, September 26, 2007.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance is a federal program that provides financial assistance to workers, including self-employed farm and non-farm workers, who lost work and wages as a direct result of a disaster. Individuals may be eligible for DUA benefits if, as a direct result of the flooding, they were unable to reach their place of employment, lost work because of an injury, or became the major supporter of a household because the head of the household died as a result of the storm. DUA benefits are not payable if the individual qualifies for regular unemployment benefits.

DUA benefits are based on a person's earnings for the most recent tax year. As a result, applicants will be asked to furnish earnings data from their 2006 federal tax return when filing a claim. The DUA benefit, depending upon yearly income and loss of wages, can range from \$132 to \$355 per week. The first potential week payable for DUA benefits is the week of August 19, 2007 through August 25, 2007.

Applications must be filed by telephone by calling the state Unemployment Insurance Division in Madison at (608) 232-0678, in Milwaukee at (414) 438-7700, or toll free at (800) 822-5246. A special (TTY) number for the hearing impaired is also available at (888) 393-8914.

After flooding and severe storms hit southern Wisconsin beginning August 18, Governor Doyle announced the five counties were declared federal disaster areas for individual assistance, which means DUA benefits are available to workers who qualify. An additional nine counties were declared federal disaster areas earlier this month, and workers in those counties must apply for benefits by October 8, 2007. Those nine counties are Columbia, Dane, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Kenosha, Racine, and Rock counties.

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