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State Allots \$100,000 for Flood Counseling in Southeast Minnesota

Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center to Provide Services in Four-County Area

Rochester, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Human Services awarded a \$100,000 grant to Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center to provide outreach and crisis counseling services to people affected by the June flooding. The grant applies to residents in Fillmore, Freeborn, Houston and Mower counties.

Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center staff will provide a variety of services, ranging from information on available resources to comprehensive counseling using assessment, diagnosis and therapy by licensed professionals. Services are available to anyone impacted – directly or indirectly – by the severe weather.

“These funds will greatly enhance our ability to meet the mental health needs for Southeastern Minnesota residents affected by this disaster,” said Patricia Carlson, executive director for Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center. “Conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder and severe anxiety require counseling to help people work through their unique issues.”

The organization has been providing triage and education services since August 2007 to residents in Fillmore, Houston and Winona counties through a FEMA-funded grant. To date, more than 6,000 people have received services through the Flood Recovery Partners program.

Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center has set up offices in Rochester, Austin and Rushford to provide close, convenient access for residents. The Rochester office is located at 343 Wood Lake Drive SE; the Austin office at 111 11th Avenue NE; and the Rushford office at 901 Home Street. People can also call toll-free at 1-800-422-0161.

“The anxiety symptoms people may be feeling – trouble sleeping, nightmares, difficulty concentrating, emotional numbing, irritability, isolation and others – are perfectly normal given

the trauma experienced just a few months ago,” said Heather Geerts, LICSW, project manager. “We have a range of resources and educational materials that provide emotional support to people.”

About Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center

Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center enhances the quality of life for residents in southeastern Minnesota by serving as a community resource for the understanding and treatment of behavioral health and substance use disorders. The organization collaborates with government agencies, schools, non-profit groups and others to provide programs dedicated to improving the mental health of adults, adolescents and children. Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center is a private, non-profit organization serving Olmsted and Fillmore counties. For more information, visit our Web site at www.zumbromhc.org or call 507-289-2089.

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