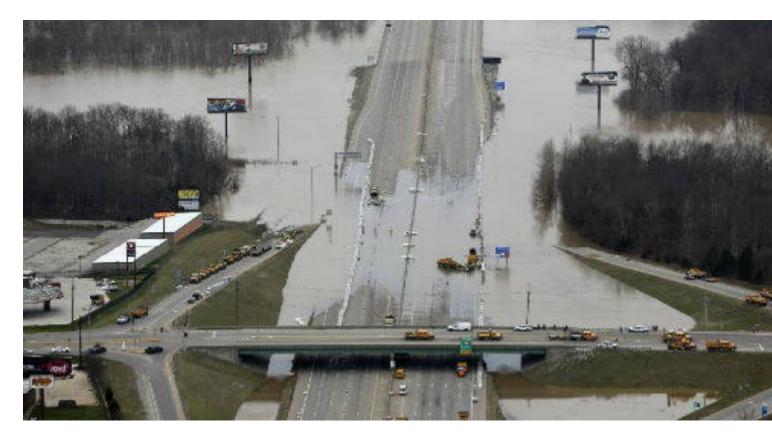
## U.S. National Guard Activated Over Flooding in Midwest



St. Louis, January 2 (RHC)-- As the death toll from days of heavy rain in the U.S. Midwest is rising, the Illinois National Guard has been ordered to take action. Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner told reporters: "I have ordered Illinois National Guard soldiers into active duty to aid local efforts to save lives and mitigate flood damage in Southern Illinois."

According to news reports, 23 people have died so far in the Midwest, including fifteen in Missouri and eight in Illinois. The reports also show that the toll could still rise, as the fate of two missing Illinois teenagers last seen several days ago is still unknown.

On Friday, hundreds of people were urged to flee rising floodwaters after swathes of the United States have been struck in the last week by tornadoes, storms and torrential rain. Many people have to be relocated as their homes have been either damaged or wiped out completely.



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