



**FEMA**

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# Fact Sheet

## **PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in coordination with State and local governments will conduct a Public Assistance (PA) Pilot Program designed to reduce the Federal costs of administering the PA Grant Program, increase flexibility in administering the PA Grant Program, and expedite the much-needed recovery dollars to the program's applicants following disasters.

FEMA is developing the PA Pilot Program in response to the 2007 DHS Appropriations Act. The Pilot procedures are applicable to debris removal and the repair, restoration, and replacement of damaged facilities.

Beginning in the summer of 2007, FEMA will implement the PA Pilot Program nationwide during disaster recovery operations. Participation in the PA Pilot Program is open to State and local governments on a voluntary basis.

FEMA expects to meet the goals of the Pilot Program by focusing on four key procedures:

- Providing grants on the basis of estimates.
- Increasing the Federal cost share to applicants that have a FEMA-approved debris management plan and at least one pre-qualified debris and wreckage removal contractor identified prior to a disaster.
- Allowing applicants to retain any revenue from recycling disaster debris as an incentive to recycle debris.
- Reimbursing the straight- or regular-time salaries and benefits of an applicant's permanently employed staff that performs debris-related activities.

## **GRANTS ON THE BASIS OF ESTIMATES**

Following a Presidential disaster declaration, a Federal, State and local team formulates projects. This process involves documenting the scopes of work and cost estimates for debris removal, emergency work, or the repair, restoration, or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities. Facilities may include public buildings, utilities, and other infrastructure. The team prepares and approves a Project Worksheet (PW) for each project identified. Currently, FEMA reimburses applicants the Federal share of projects with estimates greater than \$59,700 after applicants incur the costs.

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Under the Pilot Program, FEMA will pay the Federal share of project costs upon project approval. This will allow applicants greater flexibility in completing the projects. FEMA anticipates that paying grants on the basis of estimates will deliver Federal funds faster and more efficiently to the applicants recovering from a disaster.

### **DEBRIS REMOVAL**

The Pilot Program will also test three additional procedures in the hopes of improving debris operations. These procedures are aimed at strengthening State and local capabilities, while increasing the efficiency of the PA program.

### INCREASED FEDERAL SHARE INCENTIVE

Under this procedure, FEMA will increase the Federal cost share of debris removal work for State and local governments that have a FEMA-approved debris management plan and have pre-qualified one or more debris removal contractors before a disaster happens. This allows FEMA to provide a financial incentive for efforts to increase the efficiency of disaster recovery.

### DEBRIS RECYCLING

Communities are encouraged to recycle debris as part of their overall debris operations. As a financial incentive to encourage recycling, communities will retain any funds generated from recycling debris.

### FORCE ACCOUNT LABOR

Under the PA Pilot Program, applicants will be reimbursed for the straight-time salaries and benefits of their permanent employees that perform eligible debris work. Under the current PA Program, only overtime expenses of these employees are eligible. This procedure will provide an incentive to encourage communities to build their own capabilities for activities such as debris removal and monitoring of debris operations.

*FEMA manages federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident, initiates mitigation activities and manages the National Flood Insurance Program. FEMA works closely with state and local emergency managers, law enforcement personnel, firefighters and other first responders. FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on March 1, 2003.*

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