

Florida Division of Emergency Management

Debris Removal Quick Guide

Public Assistance Projects

Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), Public Assistance (PA) Program, is providing this information to **avoid jeopardizing applicants' eligibility for reimbursement** from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for debris removal and disposal.

Debris can include downed trees, silt, sand, building components, wreckage, and personal property. Debris must be separated for proper handling, transport and disposal of hazardous materials and toxic waste including asbestos containing materials, lead-based paints, and household chemicals.

FEMA may reimburse reasonable costs associated with debris removal, such as labor, disposal fees, monitoring costs, equipment costs, material costs, or contract costs. Contracts must comply with federal regulations (2 CFR 200.320) as well as State and local procurement standards.

FEMA ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. You must be an **Eligible Applicant** as defined in the Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (PAPPG), page 10, and have the legal responsibility, page 21, to be reimbursed for debris removal. <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/111781>
2. Debris was generated by the disaster event and is located on improved property or rights-of-way of an eligible Public Assistance applicant.
3. When there is a serious threat to lives, public health and safety, it eliminates the immediate threat of damage to improved property, or it assists the economic recovery of the community-at-large.

PERMITTING AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Source documentation** including timesheets, work logs, equipment use logs, receipts, load tickets, monitoring logs, contracts, mutual aid agreements;
2. **Document** including volume or weight and pickup location(s)
3. **Document** debris management site(s), transfer stations, and final disposal location(s) including permit documentation including Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection authorization or landfill permit number;
4. **TDSR/Debris Management Site Approval:** To obtain approval for a new TDSR or final disposal location, or to activate a site pre-approved, contact your regional FL Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Permit information may be found here: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/info/permitting.htm>
5. **Debris burning (vegetative debris only):**
Must obtain a burn permit or letter of approval from the FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services: <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Florida-Forest-Service/Wildland-Fire/Resources/Fire-Tools-and-Downloads/Web-Based-Open-Burn-Authorization-Request-WebOBA>
 - a. All burning **MUST** comply with State regulations including FDEP guidance on **Open Pile Burning** here: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/em/2017/files/PostStorm_Guidance_OpenPileBurning.pdf
 - b. For **Air Curtain Incinerators** guidance, visit: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/em/2017/files/PostStorm_Guidance_AirCurtainIncinerator.pdf

In addition, there may be other local ordinances that apply in your area; be sure to check with your local fire department or county fire marshal prior to burning.

HANDLING DEBRIS

1. Separate waste types such as vegetative, C&D, white goods, household hazardous waste, electronic waste, animal carcasses, sand and mud, etc.
2. For guidance regarding **animal mortality waste disposal**, contact the State Agricultural Response Team online at <http://www.flsart.org/acmwg/>
3. For guidance on **household hazardous waste**, contact your local FDEP hazardous waste office: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/em/2017/files/Management%20of%20Storm%20Hazardous%20Waste.pdf>
4. For guidance on **asbestos removal**, additional information is available here: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/em/2017/files/PostStorm_Guidance_Asbestos.pdf
5. For information on abandoned or derelict vessels, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at 850-617-9540.

TEMPORARY DEBRIS STAGING AND REDUCTION SITES (TDSRs)

1. The FDEP Guide on Establishing, Operating and Closing a Debris Management Sites is located here: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/em/2017/files/debris_guidance.pdf
2. **Chipping/Grinding**
Grinding, chipping, recycling, or disposal should be at permitted landfills are preferred methods of disposal over burning.

FL STATE POINT OF CONTACT

To coordinate your debris removal operations or for more information please contact **Rick Knowles**, Debris Program Officer, at 850-815-4405 or 850-363-8409 or richard.knowles@em.myflorida.com.

OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

Debris Removal from Watersheds:

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service may make available the Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) to assist state agencies, county governments, towns and other subdivisions of state government to relieve storm caused impairments and imminent threats to watershed function. EWP may support removal of storm debris that poses a threat to health, life, or property. Not all storm debris in water is eligible for EWP. For more information, visit <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/fl/home/> or contact Jason Strenth, State Conservation Engineer, at (352) 338-9559.

Debris Removal from Farms and Ranches

USDA Farm Service Agency may provide assistance with debris removal from farming or ranching operations through the Emergency Conservation Program, animal mortality through the Livestock Indemnity Program, and assistance to eligible non-industrial private forest owners thru the Emergency Forest Restoration Program. For more information contact your county FSA office or visit: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Florida/index>

Debris Removal from Federal Waterways

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for removing debris from federally designated navigable channels and turning basins. They also provide direct assistance through FEMA Mission Assignment. Additional information on waterway debris responsibility is found here: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/em/2017/files/FloridaIncidentWaterwayDebrisResponseFlowchart.pdf>.