

July 2023 – Guidance from Vermont Emergency Management for Town Officials Recovery from July 9, 2023, Flooding

Good afternoon, Vermont public officials-

This email is intended for local public officials dealing with damage to public infrastructure, state agencies, and critical Private Non-Profits impacted by the catastrophic flooding which began on July 9, 2023, and it covers federal financial recovery assistance under the FEMA Public Assistance program (e.g. road repairs/culverts/debris and emergency response). It is not intended for individual homeowners or business owners who may have suffered flood damage, for whom there are other federal assistance programs and information will be provided by others.

Thank you for your service and I hope you are staying safe and healthy as we begin the recovery from this historic flooding event. Our team at Vermont Emergency Management will be there to support you in the rebuilding process in partnership with FEMA. We don't yet technically have a Major Disaster Declaration, although a federal Emergency Declaration was approved which allowed federal resources to flow and be reimbursable even ahead of a Major Disaster Declaration.

This email is to provide a quick update on what information/documentation will be required for FEMA Public assistance disaster funding once a Major Disaster is declared. Please note that any damages from July 7 and 8 will need to be tracked and reimbursed separately from the larger event which began on July 9 and is ongoing.

FEMA Public Assistance covers damages to applicant owned and maintained facilities. A **facility** must be a public building, public works system, public equipment, or natural feature. It **does not** cover private property (homes), which is reimbursed through a different FEMA program called Individual Assistance (IA). If you have residents asking about residential damages, please ask them to report their damages to 211, which is compiling a list of people we will reach out to regarding the IA process.

When beginning your recovery rebuilding process, keep records of all costs associated with your infrastructure repairs. If a federal disaster gets declared, those costs will (eventually) be eligible for federal reimbursement at a minimum of 75% federal share in a project grant. **After the disaster is declared, we will schedule Applicant Briefings to walk through how the FEMA process works.** FEMA will request information and documentation required to substantiate the eligibility of your costs. As a Public Assistance Applicant, your community will be responsible for providing information to document that its facilities, work, and costs are eligible based on the applicable laws, regulations, and policies. At a minimum, FEMA usually requires the "who, what, when, where, why, and how much" for each item claimed.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR REPAIRS:

1. **Break costs down per road site!**
2. Must be your legal responsibility to make the repairs.

3. ANR permits and Army Corps permits in place when working in/around water. Reach out to your ANR River Engineer ASAP to obtain these and ensure that you are complying with State General Stream Alteration standards for any in-stream repairs.
<https://anrweb.vt.gov/DEC/StreamAlts/RequestRME.aspx>
<https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/State-General-Permits/Vermont-General-Permit/>
4. Road maintenance records.
5. Labor timecards with **hours worked, pay rates, fringe calculations**, and a copy of the town's **pay policy**.
6. Contractor **RFP'S and bids** as well as the town's **procurement policy**.
7. Quantities of materials used and invoices for costs or load tickets (gravel, culverts), by site.
8. Equipment and operator hours, by site.
9. Photos (before and after repairs) with GPS locations to show damages.

CONTRACTS: Contractors must be procured properly. Any contract that will be over \$250k in costs for permanent repairs must be put out for full and open competition. For contracts below \$250k you will need to follow your local procurement policy, typically contacting at least 3 contractors and posting to the Vermont Bid Registry to document your procurement effort. During the immediate emergency response, you may use existing contracts and arrangements, provide they are cost-reasonable and short-term. For major permanent repairs, contractors should be competitively procured! Post RPFs to [Vermont Business Registry and Bid System - Home](#). The APEX center in Montpelier is available to assist with RFP'S. [Vermont APEX Accelerator \(formerly VT PTAC\) | Agency of Commerce and Community Development](#)

EQUIPMENT/BUILDING DAMAGE (not homes): Damages to buildings and equipment should be submitted to insurance first. Discussion with FEMA after declaration.

DEBRIS CLEAN-UP: Debris must be collected from within the public right of way. Photograph with GPS of where picked up and where placed. Include all labor and equipment costs.

For more information on the FEMA PA process please visit [Process of Public Assistance Grants | FEMA.gov](#) and/or [Public Assistance | Vermont Emergency Management](#).

Let me know if you have any questions.

Be safe,

Kimberly Canarecci

Public Assistance Officer

Vermont Emergency Management