

Another Part of West Virginia Flood Recovery: FEMA's Public Assistance

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CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Many West Virginia individuals and families are moving forward in their recovery from the July 28-29, 2017 flooding with FEMA and state assistance; they remain a priority. But roads, bridges and other elements of West Virginia life were also damaged. Who pays for those repairs? FEMA's Public Assistance Program (PA) is another arm of federal disaster assistance.

The Public Assistance Program, FEMA's largest grant program, averages \$4.7 billion nationally in assistance each year and accounts for 51 percent of the grant dollars administered by the agency.

After a declared disaster, the program pays for land and marine debris removal, for emergency protective measures, repair of eligible roads and bridges, water control facilities, public buildings and equipment, utilities, parks and other recreational facilities.

FEMA approves grants and provides technical assistance to the state and applicants. The state helps educate applicants about the program and the application process and distributes and monitors grant monies. Local and state applicants are responsible for identifying storm damage, for providing documentation and managing the funded projects.

Who is eligible for Public Assistance?

State and local governing entities such as cities, towns, and counties, federally recognized Indian tribes, and some Private Nonprofit (PNP) organizations can apply for PA grants. PNPs that own or operate facilities that provide services the government would otherwise provide may qualify. Parochial schools, and schools of higher education, as well as some community senior centers would fall into the eligible private nonprofit category because each provides a service that the government does.



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Page 1 of 3

How do funds get to the applicants?

The program's tool is the project worksheet (PW). The PW is a dynamic record of the life of the grant. It's used to collect information and provide justification for the project. It's subject to change; cost estimates may need to be adjusted.

The PW describes the eligible work, the scope of the proposed project and provides estimates of the costs to repair damage. Documentation is the backbone of the PW. The state provides applicants both educational and technical assistance in completing the PW. The federal government reviews the completed PW and then obligates the funds when the project is approved. Once obligated, the grant money is transferred to the state.

The federal share of assistance in the West Virginia flood recovery is 75 percent of the eligible cost for emergency measures and permanent restoration. The state determines how the non-federal share of 25 percent will be dispersed to its applicants.

West Virginia recovery projects affect the daily lives of residents—those who drive its roads, cross its bridges, use public buildings and much more. The PA Program, just ramping up for this disaster recovery, will bring significant benefits to everyone who calls West Virginia home.

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at **800-621-FEMA (3362)**. For TTY call **800-462-7585**.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. Follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/femaregion3> and the FEMA Blog at <http://blog.fema.gov>.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private



FEMA

Page 2 of 3

non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover losses not fully compensated by insurance or other recoveries and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For more information, applicants may contact SBA's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center by calling **(800) 659-2955**, emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov, or visiting SBA's Web site at www.sba.gov/disaster. Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals may call **(800) 877-8339**.



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