

FEMA Releases over \$83 million to Help Vermont Communities Rebuild

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FEMA has provided the state of Vermont with **\$83,600,591** in Public Assistance funding to help communities rebuild after the devastating storms and flooding that occurred in July 2023. FEMA's Public Assistance program reimburses the state and local governments, and certain private nonprofit organizations, for debris removal, emergency protective measures and restoration of disaster-damaged public facilities.

Of the total Public Assistance funding obligated so far, **\$40,311,699** was allotted for debris removal and emergency work, which includes efforts to save lives and protect property, such as overtime for first responders, distribution of food and water and temporary repairs to access roads. FEMA allotted another **\$43,288,892** for permanent repair and replacement work for roads and bridges, water control and treatment plants, public buildings and parks, utilities, recreational facilities and administrative costs.

In August, FEMA implemented restrictions on its Disaster Relief Fund to prioritize funding for response and urgent recovery efforts. When those restrictions were lifted in October, FEMA was able to resume funding for Vermont recovery projects that were temporarily paused.

"These projects are vital to communities across Vermont as they recover from and mitigate against disasters, and we will continue to work with our local and state partners to help communities rebuild from last year's storms," said Federal Coordinating Officer Will Roy. "Soon after the flooding, FEMA provided over \$26 million to residents to help rebuild and replace their homes and personal property, and we will continue to work with our local officials and state partners to provide funding for recovery projects. FEMA's Public Assistance program is a long-term operation, and we are committed to seeing it through."

Local officials work with FEMA on the scope and cost of each project. After final approval, FEMA obligates money for the projects to Vermont Emergency



Management (VEM). Once funding is obligated, VEM works closely with applicants to complete the grant process and begin making payments.

“We have been working diligently with our federal partners to help communities recover financially from the devastating impacts of last year’s flooding,” said Ben Rose of Vermont Emergency Management, Alternate State Coordinating Officer. “There is still a long way to go, but thanks to recent approval by Congress of additional funding to the Disaster Recovery Fund, FEMA has been able to release tens of millions of dollars of financial reimbursement for hard-hit communities, and that will be flowing to towns over the next few weeks.”

President Biden recently authorized an increase of the federal cost share for FEMA Public Assistance projects from 75 to 90 percent for recovery projects for the July 2023 flooding. The remaining 10 percent will be covered by the state and local governments.

For applicants that have already received funding, FEMA will automatically provide the 15 percent difference to the state of Vermont for distribution. All projects going forward will be at the 90 percent federal cost share except for those that the agency previously approved at 100 percent.

“And because the state will be covering most of the 10 percent non-federal share for the July flooding, the local community will only be responsible for 2.2 percent of the total cost of projects,” said Rose.

