

Community Aqueducts Repaired with FEMA Funds Already Serve their Communities

Release Date: ?? 11, 2024

Guaynabo, Puerto Rico – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has supported the repair of several community aqueducts in Puerto Rico due to damage by Hurricane María. Five of these aqueducts systems in the towns of Aguas Buenas, Coamo, Naranjito, Patillas and Yabucoa have already benefited from over \$331,400 from the agency to repair and strengthen the facilities for future weather events.

Community aqueducts are infrastructure managed by communities that do not receive services from the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority. Several non-profit organizations that lead these communities manage the repair of these projects.

“These aqueducts contribute to the quality of life of more than 1,000 families in Puerto Rico and are an example of how the agency supports community efforts so that they can rebuild the infrastructure that adapts to their needs,” said Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator, José Baquero.

One of these projects is the aqueduct system in the Anones neighborhood in Naranjito. Sylvia Cruz, member of Anones Centro, Inc., stressed the importance of the repairs, particularly the chlorination replacement, since it contributes to the operation and provision of drinking water for approximately 500 families in the area.

FEMA allocated over \$101,400 to repair three wells; mitigation funds were included for a surge protector and to strengthen the fence. “It’s important to preserve this aqueduct since we provide a vital service for people,” said Cruz.

On the other hand, Jorge Aponte Cintrón, a resident for more than 20 years of the Mulas-Jagual community in Patillas, said that thanks to the nearly \$86,000 from



the agency to repair their aqueduct, residents have a faster and more constant water supply. About 200 families benefit from this system, which works through sand filters and collects water from a natural source.

“The repair of the aqueduct helps to ensure that drinking water service is not interrupted and that quality water service is guaranteed so that they can continue to meet their basic needs,” said Aponte Cintrón.

Meanwhile, the aqueduct of Comunidad Coruja, Inc. in the Sumidero neighborhood of Aguas Buenas received nearly \$56,200 from FEMA for the water system that already contributes to the quality of life of over 270 families in the area.

Another community with repaired facilities is the La Cuesta sector in the San Diego neighborhood of Coamo. The repairs included the replacement of the chlorination system and the site fence and gate. Nearly \$45,100 were allocated to the work that already benefits over 100 families.

Likewise, over \$43,000 from FEMA were used to repair the rural aqueduct of the Jacanas neighborhood in the Saturnino Sepúlveda sector of Yabucoa. The system has a 62,000-gallon water tank and was built in 1974 to supply drinking water to 35 families.

For his part, the executive director of the Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency (COR3), Manuel A. Laboy Rivera, highlighted the importance of the Working Capital Advance (WCA) program and the role it plays for public sector and nonprofit entities during the initial rebuilding phases of a project.

“In addition to the technical assistance work that has been carried out with these subrecipients, COR3 advanced \$56,757 through the WCA program for the Anones Maya Aqueduct Services Corporation project in Naranjito. We encourage our subrecipients to consider this pilot program to expedite the process of rebuilding their projects. Like this corporation, there are many other private non-profit entities that we serve and that could be eligible for advances from the program,” said Laboy Rivera.



To date, FEMA has allocated nearly \$31.7 billion for over 10,900 projects that address the reconstruction of Puerto Rico. Of these funds, nearly \$6.8 million are earmarked for nearly 140 community aqueduct systems throughout the island.

For more information about Puerto Rico's recovery, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4339](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4339), [fema.gov/disaster/4473](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4473) and [recovery.pr](https://www.recovery.pr). Follow us on our social media at [Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico](https://www.facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico), [Facebook.com/COR3pr](https://www.facebook.com/COR3pr) and [Twitter @COR3pr](https://twitter.com/COR3pr).

AQUEDUCT SYSTEM IN THE ANONES NEIGHBORHOOD IN NARANJITO, PUERTO RICO



Naranjito, Puerto Rico (January 23, 2023). FEMA allocated over \$101,400 to repair three wells at the aqueduct system in the Anones neighborhood in Naranjito. Repairs included the chlorination replacement, which contributes to the operation and provision of drinking water for approximately 500 families in the area. Mitigation funds were assigned for a surge protector and to strengthen the fence. Photo FEMA/Eliezer Hernández



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