

Public Agency Disaster Assistance Program

The Public Assistance Program enables local and state governments, special purpose districts, private nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes to recover from the immediate and long-term impacts of disasters. The program provides state and federal funds to eligible applicants for a portion of the costs for the repair and restoration of damaged public facilities, as well as to reimburse the agencies for a portion of the costs associated with emergency work and debris removal due to the disaster.

As soon as possible after the disaster declaration, the state conducts meetings for government agencies, special purpose districts, private nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized Indian Tribes that suffered damage. At the meetings, information is presented about the reimbursement of local costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures, and the repair to damaged public facilities such as roads, bridges, buildings and utilities. Public disaster assistance applications must be submitted to the state within 30 days of the declaration of a Presidential Disaster. Public disaster assistance regulations are found in 44 CFR Part 206 and Public Law 92388, as amended.

Following the Public Assistance information meetings, applicants work with state and federal staffs to prepare repair Project Worksheets for each damaged facility. The Project Worksheets describe, in detail, needed repairs to return the facility back to its predisaster condition and provide a cost estimate.

After the Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved repair projects for funding, repairs may be started. It is the responsibility of the agency that owns the damaged public facility to make the repairs. Funding is provided through the Emergency Management Division with the federal government reimbursing 75 percent of the eligible costs and typically the state and affected agency equally sharing the remaining 25 percent.

Previously, federal and state officials prepared over 7,200 project estimates on public facilities damaged in the 1995 winter storms, February 1996 flood, 1996 winter storms, March 1997 Flood, May 1998 Flood, Kelso Landslide and the 2001 Nisqually Earthquake. Federal and state funding to restore or repair damaged facilities in these disasters exceeded \$318.4 million.

Currently, federal and state staffs in conjunction with state and local jurisdictions are working on the October 2003 Floods, February 2006 Severe Winter Storm, November 2006 Severe Winter Storm and Floods, December 2006 Windstorm, December 2007 Severe Winter Storm and Floods, December 2008 Severe Winter Storm and Snow, January 2009 Severe Winter Storm and Floods, January 2011 Severe Winter Storm and floods, January 2012 Severe winter Storms and Floods, and July 2012 Severe Storm and Straight-line Winds. Federal and state funding to restore or repair damaged facilities in these disasters exceeded \$305.5 million.

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