



FEMA

RECOVERY POLICY

RP9523.12

I. TITLE: **Debris Operation – Hand-Loaded Trucks and Trailers**

II. DATE: **AUG 17 2010**

III. PURPOSE:

This policy describes the criteria the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will use to reimburse applicants for eligible debris removal accomplished with trucks and trailers loaded physically by hand, rather than with mechanical equipment.

IV. SCOPE AND AUDIENCE:

The policy is applicable to all major disasters and emergencies declared on or after the date of publication. It is intended for all personnel involved in the administration and execution of the Public Assistance Program, including applicants.

V. AUTHORITY:

Sections 403 and 407 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121-5206, as amended.

VI. BACKGROUND:

A. Debris removal companies under contract with local governments have frequently supplemented their vegetative debris removal operations by hiring subcontractors who modify their trucks and trailers by extending sidewalls with plywood or other materials to increase the vehicle's load capacity. Because of the tenuous nature of these modifications, operators typically load these vehicles physically by hand. The inefficiencies associated with loading these trucks or trailers by hand, instead of using mechanical equipment, effectively negates the increased capacity advantages of these vehicles. Hand loading cannot achieve compaction levels comparable to mechanically loaded vehicles. Further, the unit cost for transporting debris is based on mechanical loading of trailers and trucks.

B. FEMA performed studies throughout the State of Florida following the four devastating hurricanes in 2004 and determined that a mechanically-loaded vehicle had a weight-to-volume ratio at least twice that of hand-loaded vehicles. In other words, vehicles of the same measured capacity that were loaded by mechanical equipment and reasonably compacted carried at least twice the volume of debris as those loaded physically by hand. FEMA has therefore determined



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it is not reasonable to reimburse applicants for hand-loaded vehicles and mechanically loaded vehicles at the same time.

VII. POLICY:

A. Debris monitors located at temporary or final debris disposal sites will reduce the observed capacity of each hand-loaded truck or trailer load by 50% because of the low compaction achieved by hand-loading. For example, if a 40 cubic-yard (CY) hand-loaded truck or trailer arrives at a debris management or disposal site, and it appears to be 100 percent full, the actual quantity of debris in the truck or trailer will be recorded as 20 CY $\{(40 \text{ CY} / 2) * 100\}$. In the same manner, if the truck or trailer appears half full, the load will be recorded as 10 CY $\{(40 \text{ CY} / 2) * 50\}$. The maximum amount recorded for a hand-loaded vehicle will be 50% of its measured capacity. However, the capacity should not be reduced for debris types that volumes cannot be significantly reduced by mechanical loading methods.

B. FEMA will reimburse applicants on the basis of capacities calculated in VII-A.

VIII. RESPONSIBLE DIVISION: Recovery Directorate (Public Assistance Division).

IX. SUPERSESSSION: This policy supersedes Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.12, dated May 1, 2006, and any other previous guidance on this issue.

X. REVIEW DATE: Three years from the date of publication.

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