



FEMA RECOVERY PROGRAM GUIDANCE

I. **TITLE: *Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Pilot Program***

II. **DATE:** November 16, 2012

III. **PURPOSE:** FEMA designed—in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Sandy – the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Pilot Program to assist State, local and Tribal governments in performing work and services essential to saving lives, protecting public health and safety, and protecting property. In particular, FEMA intends STEP to provide essential power to affected residences, thereby reducing the demand for other shelter options and allowing individuals to return to or remain in their home.

On October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy made landfall, impacting coastal and inland communities resulting in loss of life, major flooding, structural damage, and power loss to over 8.5 million homes and business (directly affecting over 17 million individuals). A dangerous nor'easter followed nine days later causing additional damage and power outages. Thirteen days after Hurricane Sandy's landfall and initial impact, 166,499 customers across three states remained without power, in large part due to damage to their electrical systems, which prevents electric utility companies from turning on power to the home. Without additional government assistance, many of these households may be without power for months, including over the winter, creating an immediate and undue threat to public health and safety. Accordingly, STEP delivers the urgent assistance needed to save lives and protect public health and safety.

In addition to catastrophic power loss and cascading effects, housing damage projections indicate that a significant number of residences affected by Hurricane Sandy in the States of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut may need emergency protective measures to mitigate further damage to structures and contents and to secure homes, particularly with onset of winter weather in the northeast.

Where safe and practicable, STEP may enable residents to return to or remain in their homes, as a form of shelter while permanent repairs are completed, thereby reducing the number of individuals in congregate shelters or in the Transitional Shelter Assistance (TSA) Program. Further, STEP, used along with FEMA's Private Property Debris Removal program (See Recovery Policy DAP9523.13, *Debris Removal from Private Property*), where appropriate, can increase efficiency and improve assistance to survivors in need.



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IV. OBJECTIVES:

- A. STEP is intended to save lives, to protect public health and safety, and to protect property. It is also meant to minimize the disruption of the normal functioning of communities by enabling State, local, and Tribal governments (collectively referred to hereafter as, “applicants”) to help members of their communities shelter in their own homes, when safe and appropriate. STEP may also reduce the demand for congregate sheltering and TSA.
- B. STEP consists of three distinct elements. Applicants may use one or more elements of the program as appropriate to the needs of their community:
 - 1. Residential Electrical Meter Repairs;
 - 2. Shelter Essential Measures; and
 - 3. Rapid Temporary Exterior Repairs.
- C. At the request of the State, FEMA may deliver the STEP program through Direct Federal Assistance; reimbursement of applicants who perform, or contract for the performance of, authorized emergency protective measures; or a combination of the two. Individual residential property owners are not eligible for reimbursement under STEP.

V. **SCOPE AND AUDIENCE:** This policy is intended to guide all FEMA personnel responsible for providing STEP assistance.

VI. **AUTHORITY:** Section 403, 42 U.S.C. 5170b(a)(3)(B) and (I), and 5170b(a)(4) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended.

VII. POLICY:

- A. STEP is only available for declared counties in FEMA-4085-DR-NY, FEMA-4086-DR-NJ, and FEMA-4087-DR-CT.
- B. Direct Federal Assistance and reimbursement through the Public Assistance Program will be at the Federal cost share rate established by the President for Category B emergency protective measures.
- C. STEP is for residential properties only.
- D. The applicant must provide FEMA and the State, with a frequency determined by the Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), with a list of residences that receive assistance



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under STEP to include: owner/occupant's name, address, and FEMA registration number, if applicable. (Some residences receiving assistance under STEP may not have applied for FEMA Individuals and Households Program (IHP)).

- E. FEMA makes no warranties of any sort for any assessments or temporary repairs undertaken pursuant to this program.
- F. Within 30 days of receiving approval from the FCO pursuant to paragraph VII.H.1, the applicant must obtain a Right of Entry (ROE) from each participating property owner on a form approved by FEMA. At the FCO's discretion, this may be extended for an additional 30 days. The ROE allows FEMA, applicants, or their authorized contractors and representatives, access to the property. STEP work will not be completed without the submission of a ROE. All STEP work must be completed within 60 days after receipt of the ROE.
- G. Eligible costs must be reasonable and are limited to \$10,000 per residential unit to include equipment, materials, labor and any associated inspection fees that are necessary to accomplish work that is eligible under STEP. At the request of the GAR, the FCO may authorize that a higher cost is reasonable. The FCO and the GAR must make such determinations only for good cause and in writing.

H. Implementing the Program.

1. The Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR) must submit a written request for STEP to the FCO within 30 days of the date of the declaration and, in that request, designate the areas requested for STEP.
2. Upon receipt of the GAR's request, FEMA will coordinate with the State and applicant to determine:
 - a. The elements of the program the applicant intends to use by designated location. Applicants will make the element-to-area designation in writing. Element-to-area designations may be as broad as countywide, or limited by zip code, by street, or other identifier selected by the applicant.
 - b. Whether the applicant requests, through the State, that the program is implemented through Direct Federal Assistance, through reimbursement under the Public Assistance Program, or through some combination of these mechanisms.



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- c. If the applicant requests, through the State, that FEMA implement the program through Direct Federal Assistance: whether materials and equipment necessary for the emergency protective measures will be purchased by FEMA, the State or by the applicant.
3. Upon approval of the GAR's request and scoping of the work with the applicant, FEMA will provide Direct Federal Assistance or reimbursement assistance under the Public Assistance Program.
- I. **Identifying Residences.** Applicants, mission-assigned agencies, and contractors, as applicable, may identify residences potentially appropriate for STEP through a variety of sources. To be appropriate for STEP, a residence must:
1. Be located within the geographic area established by the GAR in the STEP request;
 2. Be a structure of such a sound nature that authorized emergency work can be safely made, with no large impediments blocking access to the dwelling such as large trees; and
 3. Be reasonably able to serve as a suitable shelter upon completion of the emergency protective measures authorized under this program.
- J. **Applicant Responsibilities.**
1. The applicant will obtain a signed ROE agreement from each residential property owner for the type of work to be performed in accordance with paragraph VII.F.
 2. The applicant is responsible for accelerating and facilitating the issuance of any and all electrical or other permits required to complete the eligible work and will arrange, accelerate, and facilitate any and all inspections required by State or municipal law.
 3. If the applicant is responsible for accelerating and facilitating the issuance of any and all electrical or other permits required to complete the eligible work and will arrange, accelerate, and facilitate any and all inspections required by State or municipal law.
 4. If the applicant selects reimbursement through the Public Assistance Program, it must comply with the Federal procurement standards in 44 CFR 13.36. The applicant will submit its claim for reimbursement in the form of a Project Worksheet through the State to the FEMA Public Assistance Program.

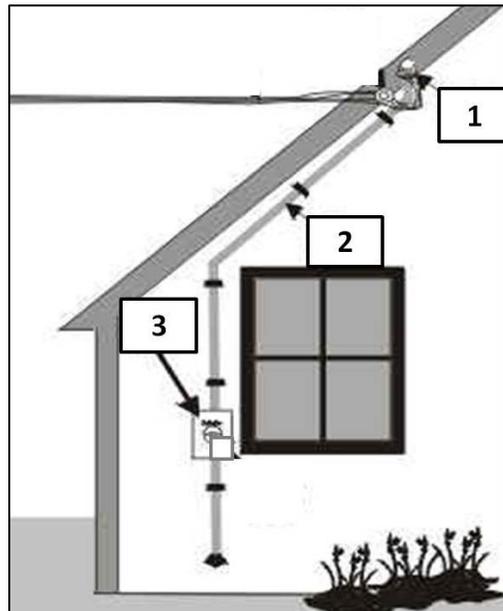


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K. **Residential Electrical Meter Repairs** - Residential Electrical Meter Repair is intended to accelerate power restoration to residences with storm-damaged electrical meters when such repairs are a necessary and essential condition precedent to a utility company re-energizing a qualified residence.

1. The following items are eligible for repair:
 - a. The weather head (*item 1* in the figure below) – attaches to the service cable and prevents water damage to the wiring.
 - b. Service cable (*item 2* in the figure below) – runs from the weather head to the meter box and from there to the panel box inside the house.
 - c. Meter socket and box (*item 3* in the figure below).

The diagram identifies the eligible elements of an exterior electrical system.



2. Standby time for electricians is not an eligible cost.

L. **Shelter Essential Measures** – Shelter Essential Measures are intended to provide electricity, heat, and hot water to disaster-impacted residences to meet basic life-sustaining needs so that occupants may shelter-in-place until more permanent repairs can be made.



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1. Eligible work may include measures necessary to provide essential electrical supply, heat, and hot water and necessary inspections.
2. Measures taken under this program may not necessarily provide permanent repair to a residence's electrical infrastructure, or restore electricity to all portions of the residence.
3. Damaged portions of the electrical system not essential to restoring the electrical supply to the meter and into the residential unit may be disconnected from the utility as an eligible expense of this program.

M. Rapid Temporary Exterior Repairs – Rapid temporary exterior repairs are intended as necessary and essential assistance to protect storm-damaged residences from further damage that may present an immediate threat to life and property, and where appropriate, facilitate sheltering-in-place pending repairs that are more permanent.

1. The following work may be eligible:
 - a. Securing broken windows;
 - b. Covering damaged exterior walls and roofs; and
 - c. Patching or otherwise securing damaged exterior doors.
2. Note: STEP involves the use of raw, unfinished materials to provide only emergency protective measures. For example, plywood, secured with a padlock, may be installed in the entryway of the home, to serve as a temporary door.

N. Effect on Other Assistance.

1. Participation in the STEP Pilot Program will make a FEMA IHP applicant ineligible for further TSA assistance, if authorized, or subsequent lodging expense reimbursement once work performed under the STEP program is completed. The FCO may grant exceptions to this requirement, including for individuals with access or functional needs.
2. Removal of debris to allow access to the residence is **not** covered under STEP. For information on debris removal from private property see DAP9523.13, *Debris Removal from Private Property*.

O. FEMA will evaluate this pilot program on a variety of factors, including whether it:



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1. Successfully protected public health and safety, and property, from immediate threats;
2. Resulted in participants re-occupying their residences more quickly than they would have using traditional assistance programs; and
3. Resulted in overall cost-savings to the government relative to traditional FEMA assistance programs.

VIII. ORIGINATING OFFICE: Recovery Directorate.

IX. SUPERSESSION: This Program Guidance supersedes the Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Pilot Program dated November 13, 2012.

X. REVIEW DATE: This policy is in effect from the date in paragraph II above for these events. Before implementing STEP in a future event, the initiative will undergo a comprehensive review.

//signed//
Deborah Ingram
Assistant Administrator
Recovery Directorate

11/16/12
Date



Brad Kieserman
Chief Counsel

11/16/12
Date