

Removing Obstacles on the Road to Recovery

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – In a joint effort between the Government of Puerto Rico, FEMA, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), teams are working to remove debris from public and private property. Hurricane Maria's strong winds and heavy rain brought down trees and power lines, damaged houses, schools and businesses and left approximately 6.2 million cubic yards debris, which could fill Yankee Stadium about seven times.

The Government of Puerto Rico and USACE are working together to collect and dispose of debris to clear the path for people to get back into their neighborhoods, for businesses to be able to reopen, and for communities to become accessible.

After collection, debris is trucked to temporary staging areas where it is inspected and separated into categories. Items that can be recycled are prepared for reuse. Where practical, vegetative debris is ground and chipped. The remaining debris is disposed of in the safest, most cost effective manner possible.

FEMA is reimbursing state and local governments at 100 percent of the eligible debris removal costs for up to 6 months from the declaration date.

To date, the Public Assistance program has awarded more than \$10 million to local municipalities to assist with the cost of debris removal.

For debris removal to be eligible, the damage must be a direct result of hurricanes Irma and Maria, and the work must be necessary to:

- Eliminate an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety;
- Eliminate immediate threats of significant damage to improved public and private property when the measures are cost effective; and
- Ensure the economic recovery of the affected community to the benefit of the community-at-large.



FEMA

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