

**Mississippi Emergency Management Agency**  
**Debris Removal Quick Guide**  
Public Assistance Projects

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) Public Assistance (PA) Program is providing this information early to **avoid jeopardizing applicants' eligibility for reimbursement** from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for debris removal and disposal.

Debris can include downed trees, silt, sand, building components, wreckage, and personal property. Debris must be separated for proper handling, transport and disposal of hazardous materials and toxic waste (e.g., asbestos containing materials, lead-based paints, household chemicals).

FEMA may reimburse reasonable costs associated with debris removal, such as labor, disposal fees, monitoring costs, equipment costs, material costs, or contract costs. Contracts must comply with Federal (44 CFR Part 13), State, and local procurement standards.

**FEMA ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

1. You must be an **Eligible Applicant** as defined in the Public Assistance Policy Guide (FP 104-009-2 / April 2018, page 9) and have the legal responsibility (page 20), to be reimbursed for debris removal.
2. Debris was generated by the disaster event and is located on improved property or rights-of-way of an eligible Public Assistance applicant.
3. When there is a serious threat to lives, public health and safety, it eliminates the immediate threat of damage to improved property, or it assists the economic recovery of the community-at-large.

**PERMITTING AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Source documentation** (e.g. timesheets, work logs, equipment use logs, receipts, load tickets, monitoring logs, contracts, mutual aid agreements)
2. **Document** volume or weight, and pickup location(s)
3. **Document** final disposal location(s) of debris (e.g. permitted landfill, recycling, etc.)
4. **Temporary debris storage and reduction site(s) (TDSR):**  
To obtain approval for a new TDSR or final disposal location, submit a request in writing to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.
5. **Photography of root balls:** Should include and overview of the entire root ball, with close-ups of the soil and the hole. GPS coordinates must be provided for EHP review **prior** to removal.

**HANDLING DEBRIS**

1. Segregate waste types (e.g. vegetative, C&D, white goods, household hazardous waste, electronic waste, animal carcasses, sand and mud, etc.)
2. Grinding, chipping, recycling, or disposal should be completed at permitted landfills or debris management sites. Chipped debris can be donated.
3. For questions regarding animal mortality waste disposal, contact MS Board of Animal health online at [http://www.mbah.state.ms.us/regulations/regulations\\_html/ch07.htm](http://www.mbah.state.ms.us/regulations/regulations_html/ch07.htm)
4. Careful consideration of demolition and debris removal techniques in historically/archaeologically sensitive areas (i.e. parks, battlefields, recreational areas, etc.) will minimize the risk of federal funding withdrawal. Additionally, any site on non-paved surfaces should be brought to the attention of FEMA EHP for further investigation. When removing debris from these sites, the following measures should be pursued in order to insure that resources are not adversely impacted by federally funded undertakings:
  - No heavy machinery will be allowed on sensitive or at-risk landscapes and all staging should be limited to service roads, parking lots, or non-sensitive landscapes.
  - Tracked vehicles will be used whenever possible to reduce soil compaction and surface disruption.
  - Excavation of on-site materials for backfill or landscaping purposes is not allowed nor is on-site burial of debris. If it is necessary to fill root ball voids, do it with clean fill, from an off-site location.

- Rootballs fully out of the ground, with artifacts embedded in associated soil, should be placed back in their original holes with artifacts still attached.
- Stumps will be removed by mechanical means with as little unnecessary ground disturbance as possible using chains and/or the bucket of the machinery. Void spaces will be backfilled with loose native soil and fill. An archaeologist under the supervision of an archeologist meeting the Secretary of Interior (SOI) Professional Qualifications will be present during the removal of stumps and root balls within or adjacent to a previously recorded archaeological site or when there are unexpected discoveries.
- Any change in the approved scope of work that increases the need for additional ground disturbance will require a re-submission of the project to FEMA for re-evaluation.
- Consultation with the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), may be necessary determine appropriate measures to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Failure to follow these stipulations may jeopardize FEMA funding.

### **MS STATE POINT OF CONTACT**

To coordinate your debris removal operations or for more information please contact Trent Jones ([tjones@mdeq.ms.gov](mailto:tjones@mdeq.ms.gov)) or Ethan Mayeu ([emayeu@mdeq.ms.gov](mailto:emayeu@mdeq.ms.gov))

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Solid Waste Programs information and regulations is available at: <https://www.mdeq.ms.gov/land/waste-division/solid-waste-management-programs/emergency-debris-information/> or by phone at 601-961-5171

### **OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES**

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** public site for debris management guidance, sample contracts and job aids available at <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/EmergencyOperations/NationalResponseFramework.aspx>

### **ADDITIONAL ONLINE INFORMATION**

The Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (FP 104-09-2) may be found at <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/111781>