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FEMA

Disaster News

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FEDERAL DISASTER AID TO WEST VIRGINIA TOPS \$7 MILLION

CROSS LANES, W. Va. —Quickly administering aid to 18 affected West Virginia counties, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has obligated more than \$7 million in Public Assistance (PA) funding. These funds will help repair and replace public infrastructure damaged by severe storms, flooding, landslides and mudslides during the period of April 14-18, 2007.

"One of the key elements in the recovery process is rebuilding the infrastructure," said FEMA's Federal Coordinating Officer Tom Costello. "A collaborative partnership with state and local officials has allowed us to quickly obligate more than \$7 million to assisting the state."

So far, the majority of PA funds obligated is to repair roads and bridges damaged during the mid-April floods. Additionally, funding has been provided to fire departments in several affected communities to reimburse them for the costs of providing emergency protective services.

FEMA's Public Assistance Program provides funds to state and local governments and some private non-profit agencies to respond to and recover from disasters. PA funds are available to reimburse costs incurred for emergency measures taken during and immediately after a disaster to protect life and property. Funds are also available to repair or replace disaster-damaged infrastructure. FEMA provides 75 percent of the costs of eligible PA projects, with the state providing the remaining 25 percent.

In addition to Public Assistance funding, FEMA is also providing additional funds for efforts to reduce future disaster losses. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) offers funding for mitigation projects including buy-outs of repeatedly flooded homes and elevating buildings in flood-prone areas. The HMGP is administered by the state, with projects selected based on the state's priorities.

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FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.