

**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION
HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE**

Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

Related Information/Forms

**AN ANNEX TO THE
*NEW YORK STATE COMPREHENSIVE
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN***

Revised September 1999

INTRODUCTION

The initial formation of the Disaster Preparedness Commission's Debris Clearance Task Force evolved from State agencies responding to requests from local municipalities requesting assistance in responding to and recovering from natural disasters that created debris clearance problems. Recent events indicated the need to expand the focus of the Task Force to include the variety of situations that can impact the State's transportation network. To reflect this change in scope, the Task Force name has been changed to the *Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force*. Members of the Task Force have also reviewed the policy and responsibilities in an effort to increase the effectiveness of the Task Force and to clarify its operations.

Task Force members hope that this document will be useful to local municipalities as they develop plans, and respond to future events.

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CHAPTER 1

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE POLICY

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force is to provide coordinated, temporary, focused, limited State assistance after a State Disaster Emergency Declaration to local municipalities who have exhausted their local resources, but still have closed roads that create life-threatening and unsafe situations. The intent of State assistance is to re-open local roads, rather than to restore those roads to pre-event conditions.

II. STATE DISASTER EMERGENCY DECLARATION

Under a State Disaster Emergency Declaration (Section 28, New York State Executive Law, Article 2-B), the Governor normally issues an Executive Order which directs State agencies to take such actions as may be necessary to assist affected areas in repairing, restoring and protecting public and private facilities and to provide such other emergency assistance as would protect the public health and safety.

III. STATE HIGHWAY EMERGENCY REPAIR AND/OR DEBRIS CLEARANCE ASSISTANCE

Frequently, in the aftermath of a disaster, municipalities and public utilities must repair roads and bridges and/or remove large quantities of downed trees as part of their efforts to restore services. When a State Disaster Emergency is declared, State agencies may be directed to assist in those efforts. If that occurs, their activities will be conducted in accordance with the policies described below, subject to the direction of and priorities established by the State Coordinating Officer.

IV. STATE HIGHWAY EMERGENCY REPAIR AND/OR DEBRIS CLEARANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

With respect to highway emergency repair and/or debris clearance and removal, the State's policy following a State Disaster Emergency Declaration is as follows:

- A. State resources may be utilized to perform temporary repairs and/or clear debris from impacted roadway surfaces and other public property when local resources have been depleted. The permanent repairs and/or removal of the cleared debris and ultimate storage and/or disposal is the responsibility of the affected governmental entity. (Clearance means that roads/lanes are passable for emergency vehicles; debris may be in the highway right-of-way.

Removal means that debris is removed from the highway right-of-way and properly disposed.)

- B. State missions shall be assigned on a prioritized basis, according to the following order of priorities:
 - 1. First: to re-open transportation corridors in order to enable the passage of emergency vehicles.
 - 2. Second: to re-open transportation corridors and other property to allow utility crews access to facilitate repairs of the utility infrastructure and restore power.
- C. The State Emergency Management Office will activate the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Leader when a potential or actual emergency situation may result in local municipal requests for State assistance. The Task Force Leader will then activate Task Force members.
- D. The Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will activate the Local Highway Emergency Task Force(s). The number and location of the Local Highway Emergency Task Force(s) will be determined by the event.
- E. The State Emergency Management Office will inform the affected County Emergency Operations Center(s) as to how to contact the Local Highway Emergency Task Force.
- F. Local jurisdictions will submit all requests for assistance to the County Emergency Operations Center.
- G. The County Emergency Operations Center will review all requests from local jurisdictions to ensure that the requests are consistent with the priorities of this Policy and that all local resources are deployed for highway emergency activities.
- H. When all local municipal resources are deployed for highway emergency activities according to this Policy, the County Emergency Operations Center will submit a request to the Local Highway Emergency Task Force for State assistance.
- I. When requested by the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force, State agencies will conduct damage assessments at impacted sites in order to determine the appropriate equipment and other resources needed to perform the required work and/or provide personnel to serve on the Local Highway Emergency Task Force(s). The information to be collected will be compiled and transmitted in a format similar to **Attachment A**.

- J. Local Highway Emergency Task Force members will jointly review requests for assistance to determine which agencies have the appropriate and necessary resources available to perform the required work.
- K. When Local Highway Emergency Task Force agencies do not have the appropriate and necessary resources available to perform the required work, the Local Highway Emergency Task Force Leader will contact the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Leader to determine if State resources are available in another location.
- L. When appropriate and necessary State resources are not available (already totally committed and/or not available in agencies' inventory), Local Highway Emergency Task Force members will assist local municipalities to identify potential contractors.
- M. Early in the response, the Local Highway Emergency Task Force will assist local municipalities to identify potential contractors and/or provide contracting assistance, guidance, and/or expertise to facilitate the transition of response and recovery activities from State agency assistance back to local municipality responsibility.
- N. The intent of State agency assistance is to re-open roads, rather than to restore the local transportation system to pre-event conditions. In some situations, State agencies will move debris to the side of the road(s) and the local jurisdiction which owns the road will be expected to transport debris from the side of the road to approved disposal sites or to landfills for final disposition (burying, burning, etc.).
- O. At the direction of the State Coordinating Officer, or within one week after the issuance of the State Disaster Emergency Declaration, the State Coordinating Officer, staff of the State Emergency Management Office, staff of impacted local jurisdictions, and the Leader of the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will assess the need to determine a completion date for the collection of debris placed in public rights-of-way (ROW) by private property owners and others. This assessment will be conducted at least weekly thereafter. Once the State Coordinating Officer decides to implement a completion date, staff of the State Emergency Management Office will notify the County Emergency Operations Center and request that the date be publicized to all of the affected jurisdictions. The purpose of the deadline is to maintain emphasis on the emergency nature of the work and to insure that storm-related activities are completed in a timely manner. This will also serve to avoid problems that can occur when non-disaster work is performed simultaneously with emergency projects. In addition, this will allow residents and local jurisdictions to complete storm clean-up and will free governmental workers to proceed with other essential services.

- P. The condition of all roads will be regularly assessed/monitored to determine priority for possible deployment of available State resources. Roads will be assessed according to the following rating system:
- 1 = impassable
 - 2 = one (1) lane passable
 - 3 = two (2) lanes passable, but right-of-way (ROW) not usable (shoulder damages, large debris piles etc.)
 - 4 = two (2) lanes passable, including most of the right-of-way (ROW), but some problems remain within the ROW (debris piles, erosion, slope problems, etc.)
 - 5 = normal/" clean" (pre-disaster condition)

Unless directed otherwise by the State Coordinating Officer, State resources will be re-deployed/re-assigned or withdrawn from the area when a road segment has a rating of 3 or higher.

V. STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. State Coordinating Officer provides overall direction of available State agency resources under a State Disaster Emergency Declaration.
- B. State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) coordinates State assistance missions under a State Disaster Emergency Declaration.
- C. Department of Transportation (DOT), initially after an event, will serve as the Leader of the Task Force. When appropriate, the Leader may be re-assigned to another agency, especially in later phases.

The Department of Transportation, as part of its agency mandate to keep transportation routes operable, is involved in highway repair and/or debris clearance activities. Depending on the event, the Department may provide debris clearance assistance and/or perform limited temporary highway repairs. The Department of Transportation can provide personnel to assist in preparing contractor work orders and can provide names and phone numbers of potential contractors.

The Department of Transportation will assist agencies and municipalities with special hauling permits required for equipment to be transported on roads under their jurisdiction.

The policy of the Department of Transportation is to clear debris from major transportation routes by moving it to the side of the road. At that point, the County or local jurisdiction which owns the road is expected to transport the debris from the side of the road to approved disposal sites or to landfills for final disposition (burying, burning, etc.).

- D. Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has developed "Storm Debris Handling and Disposal Guidelines" for solid waste handling and disposal procedures during emergency declarations. See Chapter 4 for this guidance, which is also available from the Department's Regional Offices or via the Internet. The Department will issue necessary environmental permits and may be able to provide debris clearance assistance.

The policy of the Department of Environmental Conservation is to clear debris from major transportation routes by moving it to the side of the road. At that point, the County or local jurisdiction which owns the road is expected to transport the debris from the side of the road to approved disposal sites or to landfills for final disposition (burying, burning, etc.).

- E. Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) can provide inmates to assist in debris clearance activities. The Department has very limited equipment.
- F. New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA) has limited capabilities to perform temporary highway repairs, but can provide personnel to assist in preparing contractor work orders and may assist in identifying potential contractors.

New York State Thruway Authority will assist agencies and municipalities with permits for equipment to be transported on the Thruway system, including the Mainline, I-84, I-287, I-95, the Berkshire Spur and the Niagara Section.

Depending on the event, the New York State Thruway Authority may provide debris clearance assistance, and/or perform limited temporary highway repairs.

- G. Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPR&HP) may be able to provide debris clearance assistance.
- H. New York State Energy Research and Development Authority may be able to provide information on alternate debris disposal methods/options.
- I. Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) may be able to provide very limited debris clearance assistance.
- J. Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) may be able to provide debris clearance assistance.
- K. Other State Agencies may be called upon to provide personnel, equipment and other needed resources.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE

Attachment A

JURISDICTION/MUNICIPALITY

CONTACT PERSON

PHONE _____
(Include area code)

DATE & TIME

NATURE OF PROBLEM(S):

- Tree debris on pavement(s)
- Earth debris (sand, gravel, rock, dirt, mud, etc.) on pavement(s)
- Snow
- Slope failure(s)
- Pavement washout(s)
- Bridge washout(s)
- Other (describe)

OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE SITUATION:

**Local Highway Emergency Task Force & Disaster Preparedness Commission
Highway Emergency Task Force USE ONLY**

Agency assigned to do evaluation:

Evaluation completed (date and time):

Resources _____ needed:

Other _____ information:

Agency to provide assistance:

Reporting location:

Time to report:

CHAPTER 2

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION
HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Highway emergency activities will proceed in a decentralized manner working through three functional levels: the County Emergency Operations Center, the Local Highway Emergency Task Force, and the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force at the State Emergency Operations Center.

- B. Local government is the lead decision maker in times of emergency and, therefore, must realize that
 - 1. Emergency work will incur overtime costs.
 - 2. Emergency work demands a 100% local commitment.
 - 3. Local government is required to be the lead agency in acquiring contractor assistance, which must be initiated early in response.
 - 4. Local government(s) will submit request(s) for assistance to the County Emergency Operations Center.
 - 5. The County Emergency Operations Center will evaluate all local governmental requests and will attempt to identify and/or arrange for assistance from other local governments and/or contractors to ensure the efficient utilization of all available local resources.
 - 6. After determining that all local resources are totally committed to the emergency situation, the County Emergency Operations Center will submit the request(s) for State assistance to the Local Highway Emergency Task Force to ensure efficient utilization of all available State resources.
 - 7. The Local Highway Emergency Task Force will submit requests to the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force when additional State resources are needed.
 - 8. The County will provide a representative or liaison to the Local Highway Emergency Task Force.
 - 9. The County Emergency Operations Center must provide a work space for a liaison from the Local Highway Emergency Task Force.

II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each functional level has roles and responsibilities as described in the following table:

FUNCTIONAL LEVEL	MEMBERS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Local Highway Department	Local Highway Superintendent	The Local Highway Superintendent will deploy all Local Highway Department resources for all highway emergency activities within the municipality in a manner consistent with the priorities established in the <i>Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Policy</i> . The Local Highway Superintendent will submit a request to the County Emergency Operations Center when Local Highway Department resources are fully committed to responding to the event, but are unable to meet life-threatening and unsafe conditions.
County Emergency Operations Center	County and/or local agency representatives; Local Highway Emergency Task Force liaison	The County Emergency Operations Center will identify local needs, establish all local priorities and coordinate the deployment of all local resources for all highway emergency activities within the county in a manner consistent with the priorities established in the <i>Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Policy</i> . The County Emergency Operations Center will also request additional resources, as needed, through the Local Highway Emergency Task Force.
Local Highway Emergency Task Force	Regional State agency representatives, such as DOT, DMNA, DOCS, DEC, SEMO, OPR&HP, NYSTA, OCFS, NYSERDA; County representative or liaison	<p>The Local Highway Emergency Task Force will monitor the activities of the County Emergency Operations Center(s) to ensure that all highway emergency activities are proceeding rapidly in the affected county/counties according to the priorities established in the <i>Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Policy</i>. In addition, when appropriate, the Local Highway Emergency Task Force will identify needs, establish priorities and deploy resources for the multi-county area affected by the event. The Local Highway Emergency Task Force will make requests to the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force for additional resources.</p> <p>The Local Highway Emergency Task Force will assign a person to be a liaison to the County Emergency Operations Center(s).</p> <p>Local Highway Emergency Task Force members will assess road conditions to determine priorities for resources to be deployed to the requesting municipality. Roads will be assessed according to the following rating system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1= impassable 2= one (1) lane passable 3= two (2) lanes passable, but right-of-way (ROW) not usable (shoulder damages, large debris piles, etc.) 4= two (2) lanes passable, including most of the right-of-way (ROW), but some problems remain within the ROW (debris piles, erosion, slope problems, etc.) 5= normal/ "clean" (pre-disaster condition)

FUNCTIONAL LEVEL	MEMBERS	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force	SEMO, DMNA, DOCS, DEC, OPR&HP, DOT, NYSTA, OCFS, NYSERDA	<p>The Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will establish expectations, i.e., priorities for highway emergency activities in all affected areas (these priorities are stated in the <i>Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Policy</i>) and will provide resources to enable the Local Highway Emergency Task Force to achieve these expectations. The Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will provide guidance, i.e., provide planning tools and disseminate appropriate information, to the Local Highway Emergency Task Force to facilitate highway emergency activities. In addition, the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will monitor the activities of the Local Highway Emergency Task Force(s) to ensure that highway emergency activities are proceeding rapidly in all the affected counties according to the established priorities by reviewing the requests for resources/assistance received from the Local Highway Emergency Task Force(s), and through site inspections. Finally, the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will support and participate in any long-range planning efforts related to highway emergency activities in the affected areas, including demobilization planning.</p> <p>After an emergency is declared by the Governor, the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force members, along with any other State agent or designee, will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not offer resources directly to local municipalities. 2. Not respond to requests received directly from local municipalities. 3. Participate in an initial meeting of the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force to discuss the situation(s), to determine potential nature of requests from local municipalities, and to identify potential agency resources that will be available to respond to local requests for State assistance. 4. Assist in identifying a staging area(s). 5. Determine crew make-up, including number of people, and kind(s) and number(s) of equipment. 6. Not send resources until requested by the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Leader. 7. Have all resources sent to affected area(s) report to the designated staging area for check in and assignment. 8. Have an agency representative attend the evening planning meeting to determine crew assignments for the next day 's deployment. May have agency crews report daily to the staging area for check in and assignment. 9. Establish daily reporting/information requirements (agency deployments/equipment inventory by location [town, sector, etc.], GIS maps of cleanup status, etc.). 10. Identify Agency staff to serve on a Local Highway Emergency Task Force that will assess conditions in the area, provide input for priorities, and assess the appropriateness of requests from local municipalities by visiting the site(s) and discussing with local contact the work to be done. Local Highway Emergency Task Force should have a DOT engineer or a DOT HMS 2.

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE LEADER

- A. After an emergency is declared by the Governor, the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force Leader will:
1. Schedule a meeting of the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force to discuss the situation(s) and to determine potential nature of requests from local municipalities.
 2. Get from the State Emergency Management Office a point of contact in each affected county for coordination of information and requests, and possible deployment of State resources. The person will be the local point of contact to the Local Highway Emergency Task Force.
 3. Form and coordinate a State resources pool (people, equipment and expertise) from which assistance can be deployed to affected areas during the emergency.
 4. Monitor and address political issues influencing the emergency response.
 5. Act as a clearinghouse for requests received through Local Highway Emergency Task Force for assistance from local counties, cities, towns and villages.
 6. Act as liaison between State Emergency Management Office and agencies providing assistance in the affected area(s).
 7. Monitor field conditions, progress and needs and channel information from the field back to the member agencies (status, projections, strategies).
 8. Schedule meetings as warranted.
 9. Provide information to locals on alternate disposal methods for tree debris, such as tub grinders (list of vendors), air curtain destructors, list of companies using wood products, etc., including transportation limitations/restrictions.

IV. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS COMMISSION HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE DEMOBILIZATION

- A. Early in the response, for logical planning purposes, the Disaster Preparedness Commission Highway Emergency Task Force will begin demobilization considerations, including an initial target date for withdrawal.

CHAPTER 3

RELATED INFORMATION AND FORMS

PRIORITY LIST FOR HIGHWAY EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

Purpose: Local Highway Departments (village, city, town, county) should list all their streets, roads, highways, etc., according to Functional Classification, on the attached set of forms before an incident occurs. This information is available from Functional Classification maps available from the Planning and Program Management Office in each Regional Office of the New York State Department of Transportation.

The attached forms are divided according to Functional Classifications, which is one way to prioritize response/recovery activities. After an event occurs, the local highway department(s), County Emergency Operations Center staff, and/or the Local Highway Emergency Task Force members can use the forms to assess damages according to the rating system on the bottom of the forms. This information can then be used to develop a 3-Day Work Plan. (See the next section for additional information.)

Also, identifying the local transportation network by functional classifications will facilitate reimbursement activities. The Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Emergency Relief (ER) Program (administered by the New York State Department of Transportation) can provide reimbursement for eligible costs incurred on Interstates, Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Urban Collectors, and Rural Major Collectors. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) Program (administered by the New York State Emergency Management Office) can provide reimbursement for eligible costs incurred on Rural Minor Collectors and Local Roads (Urban and Rural).

PRIORITY LIST FOR HIGHWAY EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

FUNCTIONAL CLASS	ROUTE/ROAD/STREET	RATING				
		1	2	3	4	5
Interstates & Principal Arterials						

_____ **COUNTY** _____
DATE

- Rating: 1 = impassable
 2 = one (1) lane passable
 3 = two (2) lanes passable, but right-of-way (ROW) not usable (shoulder damages, large debris piles, etc.)
 4 = two (2) lanes passable, including most of the right-of-way (ROW), but some problems remain within the ROW (debris piles, erosion, slope problems, etc.)
 5 = normal/"clean" (pre-disaster condition)

PRIORITY LIST FOR HIGHWAY EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

FUNCTIONAL CLASS	ROUTE/ROAD/STREET	STATUS				
		1	2	3	4	5
Minor Arterials & Urban Collectors & Rural Major Collectors						

_____ **COUNTY** _____

DATE _____

- Rating: 1 = impassable
 2 = one (1) lane passable
 3 = two (2) lanes passable, but right-of-way (ROW) not usable (shoulder damages, large debris piles, etc.)
 4 = two (2) lanes passable, including most of the right-of-way (ROW), but some problems remain within the ROW (debris piles, erosion, slope problems, etc.)
 5 = normal/"clean" (pre-disaster condition)

PRIORITY LIST FOR HIGHWAY EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

FUNCTIONAL CLASS	ROUTE/ROAD/STREET	RATING				
		1	2	3	4	5
Rural Minor Collectors & Local Roads						

_____ **COUNTY** _____

DATE _____

- Rating: 1 = impassable
 2 = one (1) lane passable
 3 = two (2) lanes passable, but right-of-way (ROW) not usable (shoulder damages, large debris piles, etc.)
 4 = two (2) lanes passable, including most of the right-of-way (ROW), but some problems remain within the ROW (debris piles, erosion, slope problems, etc.)
 5 = normal/"clean" (pre-disaster condition)

LOCAL HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE 3-DAY WORK PLAN FORM

Purpose: The Local Highway Department, the County Emergency Operations Center, and/or the Local Highway Emergency Task Force can use this form to assist with planning and developing three-day work plans/assignments. Information from this form also can be used to prepare Incident Command System Form 204: Assignment List and/or to prepare Incident Command System Form 215: Operational Planning Worksheet.

**LOCAL HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE
3-DAY WORK PLAN**

CREW #	SOURCE (Agency)	DAY 1 Date:	DAY 2 Date:	DAY 3 Date:
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				

_____ COUNTY

**LOCAL HIGHWAY EMERGENCY TASK FORCE
3-DAY WORK PLAN**

CRE W #	SOURCE (Agency)	DAY 1 Date: 1/14/98	DAY 2 Date: 1/15/98	DAY 3 Date: 1/16/98
1	DMNA	Rte 11 Adams Center clear highway	Rte 177 Rodman to Rte 11 clear highway	Adams Center restore electric
2	DMNA	Rte 11 at Rte 232 clear highway	Zoar Road clear highway	Rte 11 clean-up
3	DOCS	Rte 12 from 180 to 342 clear highway	Rte 12 from 180 to 342 clear highway	Rte 12 clean-up
4	DOCS	Rte 12 from 180 to 342 clear highway	Tanners Corners Road clear highway	Tanners Corners Road clean-up
5	DOT	Rte 180 Dexter clear highway	Jenkins Road clear highway	Lewis County
6	TWY	Rte 177 Rodman to Co Line clear highway	Adams Center restore electric	Adams restore electric
7	OPRHP	Rte 11 Philadelphia North clear highway	Rte 11 Philadelphia South restore electric	Lewis County
8	DEC	Rte 26 Theresa-Philadelphia clear highway	Rte 26 Theresa-Philadelphia clear highway	Evans Mills restore power
9	Jefferson Co.	Rte 26 Theresa-Philadelphia clear highway	Perch Lake Road clear highway	Carthage clean-up
10		SAMPLE		
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17		SAMPLE		
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				

_____ COUNTY

CHAPTER 4

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

**STORM DEBRIS HANDLING AND DISPOSAL GUIDELINES FOR
SOLID WASTE HANDLING AND DISPOSAL PROCEDURES DURING
EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS**

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION SOLID WASTE HANDLING AND DISPOSAL GUIDELINES

The Department's Division of Solid & Hazardous Materials recognizes the need for communities to perform efficient and timely cleanup of debris generated by natural disasters and/or major storm events. As a general policy, the Department recommends that when possible, construction and demolition debris (C&D debris) or other municipal solid wastes resulting from such events, be shipped from the point of origin directly to authorized transfer/processing or disposal facilities. If possible, those responsible for cleanup should first contact the Regional Solid Waste Contact (listed below) in the impacted Region for information on available solid waste management facilities in the immediate affected area. If local communication is not possible, the State Emergency Management Office at the State Emergency Operations Center should be contacted for a list of these facilities which will be provided to them by the Department's Bureau of Solid Waste & Land Management.

Where possible, the Department encourages the recycling and beneficial use of all solid wastes including solid wastes generated as a result of a natural disaster. In addition proper attention to the types and appropriate separation of debris needs to be considered. Wastes which are considered exempt should be separated from those which are regulated. Final disposal costs can thus be greatly reduced while ensuring that all disaster related solid wastes are properly managed. For instance, significant volumes of tree and limb debris can be chipped into mulch or donated as firewood to avoid expensive disposal costs and the related consumption of valuable landfill air space. As noted below, communities can effectively collect, store and process tree and limb debris within the impacted community without need for Department permitting. This, however, does not include the burning of tree and limb waste materials. Burning of debris requires special permits which may not be attainable in certain areas of the State due to concern for air quality and public safety.

In the event that solid wastes cannot be shipped directly from the point of origin to authorized transfer/processing or disposal facilities, there are several options available. Part 360 contains a number of regulatory exemptions for the management of land clearing debris wastes (i.e., tree and limb generated as storm debris) as addressed above. Provisions also exist in Part 360 for the development of new registered facilities which can be used after major storm events for temporary storage of certain types of storm debris. Additionally, temporary storage operations can also be conducted under Emergency Authorizations or General Permits. Such authorizations have been used without known adverse impacts to the environment or public safety during each the events which occurred in 1998. The discussions below provide specific guidance on all of the options discussed above.

1. **Existing Disposal and Transfer/Processing Sites**

Individuals are advised to check with the Regional Solid Waste Contact located in the appropriate Regional Office for information on solid waste management facilities in the immediate area. Also, individuals should contact the disposal/handling facility regarding tipping fees and their ability/willingness to accept the waste in question. Some of the municipally owned facilities may only accept wastes generated within their municipal boundaries. We have attached a list of the Regional Solid Waste Contacts with their respective telephone and fax numbers for your use (Attachment 1).

2. **Exemptions**

The following are examples of exempt solid waste activities for which no permits are required:

Exempt Wood Processing Facilities

Facilities that receive and process (not dispose) only land clearing debris are exempt from solid waste regulation [360-16.1(b)].

Solid Waste Cessation

The following items are not considered solid waste: unadulterated wood, wood chips, or bark from land clearing operations, when these materials are placed in commerce for service as mulch, landscaping, animal bedding, erosion control, wood fuel production, and bulking agent at a compost facility [360-1.15(b)(3)]. This exemption does not apply to the disposal of such material.

Exempt Disposal Facilities

Landfills used for the disposal of trees, stumps, yard waste and wood chips generated from these materials are exempt when origin and disposal of such waste occur on properties under the same ownership or control. Disposal facilities collecting these materials from off-site sources are also exempt from permitting requirements provided that they operate only between the hours of sunrise and sunset, and no fee or other form of payment is required for the privilege of using the facility for disposal purposes [360-7.1(b)(1)(ii)].

3. **Individual Emergency Authorizations**

For those activities which are not exempt, for example, temporary storage areas for construction and demolition (C&D) debris which is not generated on-site, authorization can be made on a site specific basis by appropriate NYSDEC Regional staff. This can be done under the provisions of "Individual Emergency Authorizations" pursuant to the provisions of 6 NYCRR Part 621, section 621.12. These provisions allow temporary storage of storm debris for a limited duration only (**maximum time, 60-days**) until

arrangements can be made for waste transportation to either treatment or final disposal facilities. Attached is a list of the Regional Permit Administrators that should be contacted for further assistance with such authorizations (Attachment 2).

4. **General Permits**

General Permits for temporary Storage of storm debris are available from the Regional Office 's Division of Environmental Permitting. Use of this provision is typically used when a State of Emergency or Disaster is declared by either the Governor or President. On matters regarding issues relative to the need for emergency General Permits, you may contact the appropriate Regional Permit Administrators.

5. **Registered Disposal Facilities**

Part 360 also contains a streamlined registration process for landfills that only accept land clearing debris for disposal and that are three acres or less in area. The registration process, however, does specify that the registered landfill must be operated in compliance with all the applicable requirements [360-7.2]. The appropriate Regional Solid Waste Contact should be contacted for guidance on the use of these provisions.

6. **Special Concerns**

With emergency events the Department has established response guidance based upon recent experience for the following areas of concern:

Utility Pole/Treated Wood Reuse & Disposal - The Department encourages the reuse and recycling of the utility poles damaged during storm events where possible. Utility poles are treated wood and therefore can not be handled or stored as unadulterated lumber or tree debris. However, the Department acknowledges that utilities, municipalities, and private entities can safely reuse portions of the damaged utility poles and thus generate significant cost savings by avoiding disposal of this fraction of the debris. During the 1998 Ice Storm the Department was made aware of the following possible reuses for damaged utility poles: utilization as landscape timbers, fencing, structural supports, and guard rails provided they are not located in or near vegetable gardens, agricultural products, silage, or where they may come into direct or indirect contact with drinking water supplies. Additionally, they should not be placed in standing water.

As mentioned above, utility poles are considered treated wood and thus, are included in the definition of "construction and demolition debris." As such, these poles can only be disposed of in authorized construction and demolition debris landfills or other authorized municipal solid waste landfills. Utility poles must be segregated from uncontaminated tree and brush debris if stored at locations approved for temporary storage and handling of storm debris. Utility companies storing poles originating on their property are exempt from 6 NYCRR Part 360. Open burning of utility poles is strictly prohibited.

Food Spoilage - Communities are encouraged to establish provisions for the disposal of food spoilage caused by sustained power outages. Food losses can be prevalent during times of prolonged power outages and the spoiled food can present an immediate threat to public health if provisions are not promptly made for its safe handling and disposal. Communities can establish special emergency procedures for the collection and/or drop off points for spoiled food waste in the event that power outages exceed an established duration. This would help minimize the impacts caused by the untimely removal of food wastes in areas of wide spread damage.

Dead Animals - Emergency Storm events can result in significant loss of livestock, pets and natural wildlife. Part 360 contains provisions and exemptions for the disposal of dead animals. Paragraph 360-1.7(b)(3) allows disposal areas for animal carcasses generated on a farm to be located within the property boundaries of that farm. Please contact your local Agriculture & Markets Department for further regulation/guidance pertaining to disposal of dead farm animals on the property where they were raised or kept for farm purposes. Paragraph 360-1.7(b)(10) allows the disposal of road-killed animals within the right-of-way on local roads and State and County highways under the jurisdiction/ownership of government agencies.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Stations - Previous storm events have revealed the need to alert debris removal crews on the need for proper separation of Household Hazardous Waste when removing extensively damaged structures. These debris removal crews often find themselves in situations where the content and nature of household/commercial or industrial wastes are unknown. Many households commonly contain numerous solvents, chemicals, paints, heavy metals, pesticides, compressed gases and petroleum products that are hazardous to human health if not handled properly. Additionally, many commercial establishments or local industries contain similar hazardous materials which raise concern if not properly handled upon discovery.

Proper precautions should be identified and implemented whereby cleanup crews can establish a controlled area to temporarily store household hazardous waste until a specialized contractor could be brought in to deal with the material. Many communities may have access to such contractors from conducting household hazardous waste cleanup days. In certain instances organizations such as the National Guard are sometimes called in on debris cleanup detail and may have lists of contractors and funding abilities for such services. A listing of permitted Household Hazardous Waste permanent collection facilities is enclosed (Attachment 3). Any questions on determining if waste is hazardous should be directed to this Department at (800) 462-6553.

Contaminated Tree Debris from Quarantined Areas - There are two localities in New York State centered in Western Brooklyn and Queens and along the southern Nassau/Suffolk border that are designated by the Department of Agriculture and Markets as emergency quarantine areas, pursuant to Section 139.2 of the Agriculture and Markets Law of New York State. Recent storm events resulted in disposal issues for trees and debris from areas under quarantine for Asian Long-horned Beetle infestation. All businesses, municipalities or individuals working inside the quarantine areas are required to be under a compliance agreement with the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for the proper handling and disposition of host material. Under the terms of the quarantine, there are also regulated articles within the quarantined area that require special handling. Regulated articles include all life stages of the Asian Long-horned Beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) and host material living, dead, cut or fallen, inclusive of nursery stock, logs, green lumber, firewood, stumps, roots, branches and debris of a half inch or more of certain genera.

Under compliance agreements for the movement of host trees or debris generated from tree trimming, removals, disposal or sales, it is mandatory for all businesses, municipalities or individuals to have crew leaders and/or supervisors attend an Asian Long-horned Beetle Training Workshop. Regulated materials are to be cut, chipped, and/or incinerated and removed in accordance with approved disposal procedures and practices identified by federal-state officials.

For more information about the program, you should contact the Department of Agriculture and Markets' William Nastyn, Senior Horticultural Inspector, Division of Plant Industry, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, (516) 732-4499.

To further assist you or others on general solid waste issues at the Division of Solid & Hazardous Materials level you may contact this Bureau at (518) 457-1860; fax: (518) 485-7733.