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FEMA PILOT PROGRAM LANDS MILLION\$ FOR INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS – Indiana applicants who raced the clock on FEMA’s Public Assistance (PA) Pilot Program expiration date will see the benefit of their diligence.

Applicants who had debris removal costs resulting from the state’s two most-recent presidential disaster declarations – tornadoes and flooding that hit in the spring and additional severe storms and flooding that started in September – will receive more than \$14 million in additional reimbursement.

These applicants included state and local governments, as well as some private nonprofit agencies. The program temporarily waived certain disaster assistance regulations and allowed public sector agencies and organizations to seek extra reimbursement for debris removal following a disaster.

Severe storms, tornadoes and flooding that hit Indiana this year resulted in great amounts of debris. The Pilot Program waiver allowed federal compensation for both overtime and non-overtime labor costs for disaster debris removal. Under normal disaster response regulations, FEMA is only allowed to consider reimbursement for overtime costs for such work.

By law, the term of the program expired on the last day of 2008. To get the full benefit of the program, federal, state and local officials went to great lengths to complete all the necessary steps before the ball dropped on New Years Eve.

“Beating the deadline was no easy task,” said Joseph E. Wainscott, Jr., Indiana Department of Homeland Security executive director. “The hard work of these officials has paid off for the people of Indiana.”

“This is a great example of teamwork,” said Regis Phelan, FEMA’s federal coordinating officer for the Indiana recovery. “A lot of people decided they were going to get this done, and they did.”

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.

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