

Beaufort County News Release

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH SECTION | COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Beaufort County Waiting for FEMA's Approval to Remove Debris from Private Property

Due to the Hurricane Matthew aftermath, last week Beaufort County sent a letter to the [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#) requesting Private Property Debris Removal (PPRD) from gated communities and private roads under [FEMA's Public Assistance Program](#). In general, the cost of debris removal on private property is ineligible for FEMA assistance.

The County received [a response from FEMA](#) requesting additional information from the County to process this request. Since that time, the County has reached out to the [South Carolina Office of the Governor](#), [the South Carolina Emergency Management Division \(SCEMD\)](#), and [the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control \(SCDHEC\)](#) requesting both orally and in writing that either the Governor's Office or SCDHEC provide the Declaration of Public Health Emergency as identified in FEMA's letter. Additionally, the County has requested that FEMA grant this request based upon [Governor Nikki Haley's Executive Order 2016-39](#), which declared a State of Emergency in South Carolina as the legal grounds necessary to satisfy the first criteria outlined in [FEMA's letter](#). The County is awaiting a response from these agencies.

Beaufort County has also compiled a list of local, private communities that have contacted the County with requests for assistance removing debris. As of this afternoon, there were more than 90 such communities. These figures do not include communities within the Town of Hilton Head Island, which is utilizing a different debris removal contractor from the County; however, the Town has supported the County in its pursuit of FEMA's approval, since all portions of Beaufort County will be affected, if granted.

Should the Governor's Office or SCDHEC provide a Declaration of a Public Health Emergency, or if FEMA accepts [Executive Order 2016-39](#) as the legal justification to allow debris removal from private communities, the County is prepared to provide all additional information requested in [FEMA's response](#). Additionally, [Beaufort County Council](#) will consider a resolution at its meeting this Monday, October 24, 2016, to provide additional justification in declaring a public health emergency.

Beaufort County will continue to issue updates to the community on the status of these requests. Here is a synopsis of the current request status:

1. Awaiting Response from FEMA
2. Awaiting Response from the Governor's Office
3. Awaiting Response from SCEMD
4. Awaiting Response from SCDHEC

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Outline of Beaufort County's Efforts to Obtain FEMA Assistance in Removing Debris from Private Roads as of October 21, 2016 to Satisfying Legal Authority/Requirement of [44 CFR 206](#) at State Level:

1. Contacting (telephone and email) SCEMD requesting the Governor's Office to Declare a public health emergency (several contacts);
2. Contacting (telephone and email) SCDHEC requesting it to declare a public health emergency;
3. Contacting (telephone and email) FEMA counsel in Washington, DC for guidance in the process necessary to participate in the PPDR program;
4. Submitting to FEMA Executive Order 2016-39 as basis to satisfy requirement of declaration at the state level (several emails);
5. Working With [Congressman Mark Sanford's Office](#) to assist in efforts to participate in the PPDR program (telephone and email);
6. Contacting the Governor's Office (voicemail and subsequent email) requesting assistance in participating in the PPDR program; and
7. Contacting (telephone and email) other affected counties interested in participating in the PPDR program to share information.

Satisfying Legal Authority/Requirement of 44 CFR 206 at Local Level:

1. Drafting Beaufort County Council Resolution Declaring Public Health Emergency in Beaufort County

Other Actions:

1. Identifying all neighborhoods and road names to participate in the PPDR program: In Progress
2. Collecting right-of-way information required by FEMA: In Progress