**Local Disaster Debris Management Planning and Response Checklist**

This checklist is designed to be used to start the process for developing a local Disaster Debris Management Plan. The Western Regional Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC) maintains a Disaster Debris Management Plan template on their website which can be used to complete the plan.

<https://wrhsac.org/projects-and-initiatives/disaster-debris-management/>. This checklist also contains response procedures that can be used during an emergency or disaster that generates debris.

Key steps in the municipal planning process for developing a local Disaster Debris Management Plan are listed below:

1. Form a local planning group to develop a Disaster Debris Management Plan. The planning group should be composed of local agency representatives and elected officials (especially those with operational roles and responsibilities under the Plan). The planning group should consider the following:
2. Assess the hazards that could generate disaster debris, focusing on local business/industry base, land use, size of the region, topography, economics, etc.
3. Develop estimates of the types and quantities of debris to be managed.
4. Assess possible/available debris management sites (DMS) for each type of debris.
5. Submit site assessments and plans for each identified DMS to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Regional Office’s Solid Waste Management Section Chief for pre-certification.
6. Hold focused planning meetings, to draft the Disaster Debris Management Plan.
7. Submit a copy of the final draft Disaster Debris Management Plan to the jurisdiction’s Chief Elected Official for review/approval.
8. Adopt the final/approved Plan, as an annex to the jurisdiction’s CEMP, and socialize it/make it accessible to key local and regional agencies for formal endorsement.

The response checklist can be included as an annex in the local Community Emergency Response Plan (CEMP). In addition, the Plan should be consistent with the State Disaster Debris Management Plan <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/debris-management-plan>.

**DISASTER DEBRIS MANAGEMENT PLANNING CHECKLIST**

**Local Government Roles and Responsibilities**

Establish a debris management planning group including a group leader. To include:

* Chief Elected Official (CEO)
* Emergency Management Director (EMD)
* Fire Chief
* Police Chief
* Department of Public Works Director (DPW)
* Board of Health
* Building Inspector
* Conservation Commission

Create a planning group point of contact list and share with planning group members.

As a planning group, determine the purpose and objectives of the Debris Management Plan.

Follow guidelines for general debris management planning.

**General Debris Management Planning**

Coordinate with MassDEP and the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency’s (MEMA) Regional office on the development of the local Debris Management Plan.

Identify all debris operations that will trigger compliance with environmental and historic preservation laws and how compliance will be obtained.

Identify local ordinances that may apply to debris management activities.

Conduct a debris collection and management site hazard analysis (See Disaster Debris Management Site Selection Worksheet.)

Develop a site map with property lines for all debris management sites.

Identify equipment and other resources that could be shared among neighboring municipalities and develop mutual aid agreements with other communities.

Address debris management in the local CEMP.

Develop, adopt, and maintain a Debris Management Plan.

Include a schedule to train and exercise staff and others in the Maintenance section of the Debris Management Plan. Review and revise the plan as needed.

**Debris Quantities and Types**

Forecast the type and quantity of debris to better determine the required response and recovery resources, number and size of storage and reduction sites and the final disposition of the disaster-related debris. The US Army Corps of Engineers has developed a debris estimation model. The Army Corps model can be found at: [www.usace.army.mil/missions/emergencyoperations/disasterimpactmodels.aspx](http://www.usace.army.mil/missions/emergencyoperations/disasterimpactmodels.aspx)

Consider the different types of debris and what management solutions would be needed for each type:

* Clean vegetative debris
* Soils and sediments
* Stumps
* Leaning trees/hanging limbs
* Building and construction material (non-asbestos)
* Asbestos containing materials
* Mixed vegetative and building debris
* Vehicles/vessels
* White goods/electronics
* Household bulk waste
* Infectious/medical waste
* Animal carcasses
* Hazardous household and commercial products
* Commercial hazardous waste

**Debris Clearance and Collection Plan**

Outline a response operation, including mapping critical facilities and the anticipated concentration of debris.

Include priorities for clearance, collection, and disposal of debris; initial clearance of debris (e.g. from roadway, power lines, etc. to facilitate emergency services); and long-term removal, processing, and management of debris.

Include preferences for collection of debris including collection options:

* Curbside collection through existing solid waste and recycling contractors
* Additional clearance and collection routes for certain types of debris (appliances, electronic, vehicles, etc.)
* Collecting materials at existing or temporary additional drop-of centers
* Residents self-hauling material directly to debris management sites
* Relying on the state disaster debris management contract

Identify contracting needs/operations to be outsourced. Volunteer agencies may also be a source of assistance in managing debris clearance and collection.

Identify a process for the collection of any materials that require separation (hazardous waste, infectious waste, vehicles, etc.).

Develop methods for monitoring debris removal contractors at pickup sites.

Develop monitoring report procedures using FEMA’s Public Assistance: Debris Management

Guide. <https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_325_public-assistance-debris-mgmt-plan_Guide_6-1-2007.pdf>

**Debris Destinations and Debris Management Sites**

Include an estimate of the number of acres of DMS needed to handle the given quantities of debris based on an actual disaster event or a worst-case scenario. The US Army Corps of Engineers debris estimation model can be used.

Design the necessary environmental controls for hazardous waste collection centers, such as liners and berms.

Identify a Point of Contact (POC) for each identified Debris Management Site.

List selected DMS that meet the preferred selection criteria set by MassDEP. If it is not possible to meet all the criteria, sites that meet the criteria as closely as possible should be selected. Refer to the State Debris Management Plan for additional guidance. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/state-debris-management-plan-appendices/download>

Work with MassDEP Solid Waste Division in advance to ensure debris management sites are

consistent with state criteria and can be pre-certified.

List DMS in local CEMP (See Disaster Debris Site Selection Worksheet.)

**Contracting**

Describe the types of debris operations that will be contracted.

Describe the process and procedure for acquiring competitively procured contract services.

Identify at least one or more debris contractors that have been prequalified to conduct disaster debris management work. <https://www.commbuys.com/bso/>

**Public Information and Outreach**

Develop a public information strategy to ensure that the public and media receive accurate and timely information about debris operations, including how to separate, where to place, how to deal with hazardous materials, and assistance available.

Identify and outline alternative public information channels that can be used:

* Press releases
* Press conferences
* Website updates
* Print, radio, or televised announcements
* Social media updates
* Local or regional public information systems such as Reverse 911 systems and web/application-based notification systems

Develop pre-scripted/pre-approved messages for the purposes of public information/press releases. These messages can be used to inform the press and public on response activities, actions to take etc. In addition, provide debris management information and materials for the public (i.e., fliers, a link to the local plan on the community’s website).

**Funding and Reimbursement**

Identify funding mechanisms for debris management and include in the Debris Management Plan.

Maintain all records, including volunteer hours, for reimbursement.

**DISASTER DEBRIS RESPONSE CHECKLIST**

**Response**

**Initial Response Actions (Ongoing until event is no longer likely to occur)**

Assess the situation.

Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to support Debris Management Operations; notify MEMA Regional Office.

Consider the following representatives to support the EOC:

* Emergency Management Director (EMD)
* Chief Elected Official (CEO)/Town Administrator
* Department of Public Works (DPW)
* Police
* Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
* Public Information Officer (PIO)
* Finance
* Board of Health
* Historical Commission
* Conservation/Environmental Commission
* Building Inspector

In coordination with local stakeholders, assess the need to activate a DMS(s).

Notify DMS Point of Contact (POC) that activation is likely.

**If this is an active emergency with no approved/proposed DM site-begin the identification process immediately:**

Site accessibility: easily accessible with controlled ingress/egress; electricity, water, no

overhead power lines, cell service, away from wetlands/watersheds/residences/historic areas/Areas of Environmental Concern[[1]](#footnote-2), available immediately (preferably municipally owned)

Site size: large enough to separate/manage most debris (vegetative, recycling, composting, white goods, building materials, hazardous materials).

Site analysis: conduct site hazard analysis

Site permits: Call MassDEP/MEMA/Board of Health to obtain emergency permission/permits to operate; ***must declare Local State of Emergency***.

Issue public information messages about the emergency or disaster as it relates to:

* Debris management
* Debris collection sites/strategies

<https://www.fema.gov/node/debris-removal-guidelines-graphics>

Notify MEMA PIO, Mass 2-1-1 and other information outlets.

Monitor media for rumors.

Begin tracking time and resources of municipal staff, contractors, mutual aid partners, volunteers, and donations.

Estimate likely damage and develop potential debris collection strategies. Take photos/collect GPS data.

**Ongoing Response Actions (First 70 working hours[[2]](#footnote-3) following the disaster)**

Declare a Local State of Emergency.

Complete Incident Command organizational chart with names and contact numbers.

Continue to collect data on resources and time used for operations.

Conduct Damage Assessments, estimate amounts, take photos/collect GPS data.

Prioritize critical route clearance using “cut and clear” method.

As needed, continue to issue press releases and messages to the public regarding debris management activities.

Prioritize access to critical infrastructure and clean up needs.

Identify additional resources needed. Contact MEMA Regional office for guidance and assistance.

Maintain health, environmental and safety standards at DMS site.

Notify/activate current waste contractors or select new contractors (must follow State/local procurement process)

Appoint a DMS Manager.

Begin setting up a DMS with a Site Layout Plan. Consider the following when developing a plan:

* Controlled access
* Security/fencing
* Lighting
* Mud/dust control: gravel, water, chips
* Runoff control: silt fences, liners
* Fire control equipment
* Monitoring towers
* Administration office
* Portable toilets
* Signage: hours, rules
* Citizen entrance
* Contractor entrance

Label Debris Types/Areas at DMS site:

* Trees, vegetative debris needing to be chipped
* Compostables
* White Goods; Electronics
* Recyclables; Bulky Plastics
* Hazardous/Banned materials
* Construction Debris/Building Materials
* Vehicles/Vessels
* Dirt/Sludge

Assign Debris Monitors to watch, count and certify debris loads and load tickets.

Train Debris staff on NOT acceptable items, safety procedures, data collection, load tickets, truck rules.

DMS Manager will inform Incident Command and EOC when Debris Management Site is ready to open.

EOC will notify MEMA Regional office of location, hours, and debris types.

Monitor Debris Pick-up Sites for compliance: separation/recycling standards; hazardous/banned material.

Work with FEMA’s Damage Assessment Team/MEMA Public Assistance to manage reimbursement claims.

**Recovery**

**Recovery Operations (90 days; if longer obtain MassDEP approval to continue to operate)**

Continue to track all resources used: force account labor, contractors, volunteer time, and materials.

Obtain approval from FEMA before clearing private property.

Clear tree/brush/leaners/hangers on rights of way, town properties and culverts. Keep records. **TAKE PHOTOS.**

Follow legal process for condemnation and removal on private property; usually when public is threatened.

Determine/select waste diversion/disposal sites. MassDEP/Local Fire approval is required for burning.

Continue to monitor all waste collection sites.

Continue to notify and educate public on debris removal and disposal rules/locations.

**Demobilization**

**DMS Closing Operations**

Remove all debris, cleanup site, test soil and groundwater as needed, restore to original condition.

Obtain written MassDEP approval before site is considered closed, otherwise subject to DEP enforcement.

Alert public to DMS closing and next steps.

Close DMS and return property to owner.

Collect all DMS data, complete required forms, and apply for reimbursement through FEMA Public Assistance Portal, if applicable.

Conduct After-Action Review (AAR) meeting to develop After-Action Report and Improvement Plan.

Update plans, policies, and procedures based on lessons learned/best practices and AARs.

**DISASTER DEBRIS MANAGEMENT MONITORING**

Debris monitoring is the responsibility of the community. Communities must monitor debris removal operations to document eligible quantities and reasonable expenses to ensure work is eligible for Public Assistance grant funding. To ensure that debris monitoring is completed adequately, MEMA has established a statewide contract for disaster debris monitoring and management services that may be accessed by all municipalities. <https://www.commbuys.com/bso/>

**Debris Monitoring Checklist**

Identify staff that will lead the monitoring operations (force account

labor/contractors).

Identify how staff will be trained for the monitoring operations.

If contractors are used, the contract must be awarded to a contractor who has no vested interest in the debris removal contract or contractor.

Establish a record management system to be implemented for monitoring during the disaster event to include: see FEMA Debris Management Guide https:/www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema\_325\_public-assistance-debris-mgmt-plan\_Guide\_6-1-2007.pdf

* Labor, benefit and equipment rates
* Personnel pay policy
* Invoices
* Load tickets and load ticket summaries
* All other field documentation that may be required for eligibility considerations
* Staff to organize labor and equipment timesheets

Position debris monitors at each point of the operations so the eligible scope of work can be properly documented (collection, DMS, final disposition).

Establish a load ticket system to track the debris from the original collection point to the DMS/final disposition <https://www.mass.gov/doc/sample-load-ticket/download>

Certify trucks using the following list of requirements:

* Size of hauling bed in cubic yards
* License plate number
* Truck identification number assigned by the owner
* Short physical description of the truck

Require debris monitors to submit the following reports:

* Debris collected from curbside and/or collection centers
* Debris accepted at the DMS and/or final disposition
* Debris recycled/reduced at the DMS and taken to final disposition
* Any operational or safety issues

**Debris Monitoring Duties and Responsibilities**

Be familiar with and maintain/implement all safety requirements.

Measure and certify truck capacities (recertify on a regular basis)

Take photographs of all trucks and trailers used in the debris operation to establish a baseline inventory of equipement.

Make unannounced visits to all loading and disposal sites within an assigned area.

Complete and physically control load tickets (in monitoring towers and in the field).

Validate hazardous trees, including hangers, leaners and stumps.

Ensure that trucks are accurately credited for their load.

Ensure that trucks are not artificially loaded to maximize reimbursement (e.g., debris is wetted, debris is not compacted).

Ensure that hazardous waste is not mixed in with loads.

Ensure that all debris is removed from trucks at the DMS.

Oversee debris reduction (burning, chipping).

Report to the project manager:

* + If improper equipment is mobilized and used.
  + If contractor personnel safety standards are not followed.
  + If general public safety standards are not followed.
  + If completion schedules are not on target.

Ensure that only debris specified in the scope of work is collected and identify work as potentially eligible or ineligible.

Ensure daily loads meet permit requirements.

Ensure that work stops immediately in an area where human remains or potential archeological deposits are discovered.

Monitor site development and restoration of the DMS.

Report to DMS Manager if debris removal work does not comply with all local ordinances as well as State and Federal regulations.

**Disaster Debris Site Selection Worksheet**

Site Name:

Site Address:

GPS Coordinates:

Estimated Size in Acres:

Estimated Volume of Debris Able to Hold (cubic yards):

*(Note: Assume up to 16,000 cubic yards/acre and only 40% of site available for debris storage.)*

Primary Local Government Point of Contact:

Name: Phone: Email:

Secondary Local Government Point of Contact:

Name: Phone: Email:

**Preferred Disaster Debris Management Site Criteria**

The site is owned or controlled by municipal or state government.

The site has easy access, including being near the area of debris generation, easy to enter and exit and near transportation arteries.

The site is ready to use as a debris management site without extensive site modifications.

The debris storage and handling areas would be at least 100 feet from property lines.

To the maximum extent possible, the site location minimizes potential environmental and public health impacts, including considering setbacks from public water supplies, surface water bodies and residential dwellings and avoiding areas such as flood plains, drinking water Zone IIs and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

If any of these criteria are not met, please explain why not and how any concerns regarding that criterion would be addressed:

**Anticipated Site Activities**

*(Intended for use only in declared disasters, NOT for routine operations.)*

A Debris Management Site Plan and layout has been prepared that considers the management and operating practices recommended in this guidance.

What types of disaster debris do you expect to manage at this site? (e.g., vegetative waste, building materials, hazardous household products, etc.):

What debris processing or other handling activities do you expect to conduct at this site? (e.g. sorting and transfer for recycling, chipping vegetative waste, transfer of trash for disposal.):

Please summarize any other benefits or concerns with using this site as a debris management site.

**Submit to applicable MassDEP Regional Office Solid Waste Chief.**

1. Areas of Environmental Concern highlight areas where special management attention is needed to protect important historical, cultural, and scenic values, or fish and wildlife or other natural resources. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Per FEMA, Time-and-Material contracts should be limited to a maximum of 70 hours of actual emergency debris clearance work and should be used only after all available local, tribal and State government equipment has been committed. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)