

FEMA Public Assistance and Policy Guide (PAPPG) V4.0

APPENDIX H: SNOW ASSISTANCE

Snow-related activities, including snow removal, de-icing, salting, snow dumps, and sanding of roads and other eligible facilities, is only an eligible emergency protective measure when a winter storm results in record or near-record snowfall. FEMA authorizes snow assistance by county based on a finding that the county received record or near-record snowfall or meets the contiguous county criteria as described below. FEMA evaluates Tribal lands either as part of a requested county or separately.

Record or Near-Record Snowfall

FEMA utilizes data collected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) to identify the historical 1-, 2-, and 3-day snowfall records for each county. For current event snowfall, FEMA relies primarily on snowfall measurements taken at National Weather Service (NWS) Cooperative Network Stations but accepts measurements from other sources if those measurements are verified as reasonable and accurate by the NWS. Historical 1-, 2-, and 3-day snowfall records by county are available on the NCEI Snow Climatology Database (SCDB) at the following website: www.ncdc.noaa.gov/snow-and-ice/snowfall-extremes. Daily snowfall reports by county are available at: www.ncdc.noaa.gov/snow-and-ice/daily-snow.

FEMA generally considers near record as being within 10 percent of the record snowfall.

FEMA follows the following process to determine record or near-record snowfalls:

- Compare current snowfall amounts with the historical record snowfall amounts for a like number of days without regard for the month in which the record snowfall or current event occurred.
- For multiple-day snowstorms, counties or Tribal lands that meet the 1-day record or near-record requirement on any 1 day, or the 2-day record or near record over 2 consecutive days, or the 3-day record or near record over 3 consecutive days, etc., meets the record or near-record criteria for that county or Tribal lands.
- FEMA relies on the NWS to determine the duration of the snowstorm.
- When data from multiple NWS-verified sources exist within a county or Tribal lands, FEMA compares the highest current event snowfall reported by the NWS within that county or Tribal land with the highest historical record snowfall for that county or Tribal land.
- For counties or Tribal lands that do not have NCEI or NWS historical record snowfall data, use the historical record from the nearest NWS Cooperative Network Station in an adjacent county or Tribal land, even if located in an adjacent State, for determining historical snowfall records.
- If current event snowfall data are not available from the NWS for a county or Tribal land, use the nearest NWS Cooperative Network Station data from an adjacent county, even if located in an adjacent State.
- FEMA may designate a county or Tribal land that does not receive a record or near-record snowfall, but is contiguous to a county (generally referred to as a "core county") that does receive a record or near-record snowfall, for snow assistance if the county or

Tribal land has current event snowfall that meets or exceeds the current event snowfall of the core county, to which it is contiguous. Base this comparison on the highest current event snowfall received by each county as reported by the NWS.

- Consider counties or Tribal areas that experience snowfalls occurring over a period exceeding 3 consecutive days that do not reach record or near-record snowfalls during a 3-day period, and for which there are no historical snowfall records for a period exceeding 3 days with NCEI or NWS, on a case-by-case basis.

Winter Storm or Snowstorm Declaration Requests

The request for a Major Disaster Declaration must include a request for snow assistance as part of that declaration. All such requests are subject to the requirements and processes established in the Stafford Act and FEMA regulations.⁴⁰⁴ In addition to the information required in every declaration request, requests for snow assistance must include the following information:

- Identification of core and contiguous counties for which a snowstorm declaration is requested;
- Duration of snowfall, as identified or confirmed by the NWS; and
- For each requested county or Tribal land, daily snowfall totals from NWS stations or NWS-verified sources and historical record snowfall data from the NCEI.

Generally, the current event weather and snowfall information is included in a statement or report from the NWS describing the event.

FEMA only includes costs related to snow activities as part of the preliminary damage assessment data for counties or Tribal lands that meet the record or near-record criteria or qualify as contiguous counties.

Other categories of work, including Permanent Work, may be authorized for snowstorm or winter storm declarations as appropriate.

Snow-Related Activities (*FEMA PAPPG V4.0 – P. 134-135*)

When the President declares an incident as a Snowstorm or specifically authorizes snow assistance in a declaration for a Severe Winter Storm, FEMA provides PA funding for impacts related to snow, but the assistance is limited. (*44 C.F.R. § 206.227*)

1. Limited Time Period

Snow-related activities are eligible for a continuous 48-hour period to address the most critical emergency needs. (*44 C.F.R. § 206.227*) Each Applicant designates the beginning of its 48-hour



Terminology

A **Core County** is a county that has a record or near record snowfall with PA costs that exceed the annually established countywide per capita impact indicator and is designated for snow assistance under a major disaster declaration.

A **Contiguous County** is a county in the same State that shares a common border with a core county without geographic separation other than by a minor body of water, typically not exceeding one mile between the land areas of such counties.

period. However, State or Territorial agency that conducts snow-related activities in multiple locations throughout the State or Territory, such as a Department of Transportation, may use different 48-hour periods for different locations.

Once FEMA approves a project for the Applicant's designated 48-hour period, the Applicant cannot change its selected period.

If the Applicant awards a contract for periods greater than the 48-hour period, PA funding is limited to the costs incurred during the 48-hour period.

The FEMA Assistant Administrator of the Recovery Directorate may extend the eligible period by 24 hours in counties, parishes, or Tribal government areas where the snowfall exceeds the historical record snowfall by at least 50 percent.

2. Eligible Work

Eligible work includes:

- Snow-related activities (for limited time as discussed above):
 - Snow removal;
 - Snow dumps;
 - De-icing;
 - Salting; and Sanding of roads and other eligible facilities.
- Other emergency protective measures (not restricted to the limited time) including, but not limited to, search and rescue and sheltering.

Limited snow-related activities necessary to carry out emergency protective measures, such as clearing snow in the immediate area of a downed power line, are eligible outside of the limited time period and in counties declared but not designated for snow assistance.

For Severe Winter Storm Declarations that do not specifically authorize snow assistance, FEMA only provides PA funding for limited snow-related activities that are necessary to perform otherwise eligible work. For example, snow removal necessary to repair downed power lines is eligible, while normal snow removal from roads (including salting and sanding) is ineligible.