

## **Five Years Post Sandy: A Stronger New Jersey**

*The Christie Administration Continues To Work With Homeowners, Business Owners, And Communities To Rebuild Homes, Communities, And Improve Infrastructure Five Years After Sandy*

### **REBUILDING HOMES TO CREATE AN EVEN STRONGER NEW JERSEY**

#### **More Than \$2.4 Billion In Housing Assistance Out The Door:**

Five years after Superstorm Sandy struck New Jersey, thousands of families across the State are making progress towards rebuilding and returning to their homes with the assistance of federal grants administered by the Christie Administration.

- Today, approximately **\$2.4 Billion** in federal housing assistance is out the door to help Sandy-impacted families and communities rebuild houses and rental units devastated by the storm.
- More than \$900 million has been disbursed to homeowners in the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) Program, meaning more than 85 percent of all the dollars expected to be disbursed in RREM have made it to homeowners.
- Of the approximately 7,600 homeowners actively participating in RREM to repair their homes, more than 5,500 have completed construction and another 700 have returned home while construction is completed. Thus, RREM has already helped more than 6,200 homeowners return to their pre-Sandy homes.

#### **Giving Homeowners The Option To Sell Repetitively Damaged Property:**

Through New Jersey's Blue Acres Program, the Christie Administration is giving homeowners the option of selling their properties damaged by Superstorm Sandy in tidal areas of New Jersey at pre-storm value so families can relocate out of harm's way. In turn, the properties are demolished and then converted to open space, accessible to the public, for recreation or conservation to serve as natural buffers against future flooding. The State has allocated over \$300 million for buyouts, including more than \$160 million through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and approximately \$175 million of HUD Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds.

- Blue Acres has surpassed \$100 million in acquisitions of homes in tidal areas affected by Superstorm Sandy or areas that have repeatedly flooded.
- **934** voluntary buyout offers have been made in 14 municipalities.
- **So far, Blue Acres has completed 610 property closings and demolished 475 properties.**
- Additionally, the Program has facilitated short sale/payoff approvals from lenders for 62 homeowners who were upside-down on their mortgage for a total debt forgiveness that surpasses \$5.1 million.

#### **Repairing and Replacing Affordable Rental Housing Units**

- Projects that will develop more than 6,500 affordable housing units have received funding commitments through Sandy rental recovery programs.
- More than \$460 million has been committed to projects through the *Fund for Restoration of Multi-Family Housing* and the *Sandy Special Needs Housing Program*, which are projected to

create approximately 5,600 affordable units. To date, 45 projects creating more than 3,100 rental units already have been completed.

- \$31 million in zero-interest loans have been approved to provide more than 190 affordable housing units in Sandy-impacted communities through the *Neighborhood Enhancement Program*; 22 of the projects are complete or nearing completion and another 20 projects are under construction or in pre-construction.
- More than 400 Sandy-damaged housing units that will be rented to low-to-moderate income families have completed construction through funding from the *Landlord Rental Repair Program* and another 230 units are under construction.

**Assisting Families With Storm Related Expenses:**

While thousands of homes and rental units are repaired, many Sandy survivors have had to juggle mortgage payments, rent, and repair costs. In addition to \$190 million disbursed by FEMA for rental assistance, the State implemented critical recovery programs to address this need.

Homeowner Resettlement Program	\$203 million To 18,589 Households
Sandy Homeowner and Renter Assistance Program (SHRAP)	\$104.1 million To More Than 11,000 Households
Rental Assistance Program	\$24.7 million to more than 2,200 households

- The *Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program* provides short-term, temporary tenant-based rental assistance in the form of a voucher to assist eligible low- and moderate-income households that were affected by Sandy, that continue to need rental assistance, and that plan to rent in the nine counties most impacted by Superstorm Sandy, which are Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, and Union. Priority is given to households at or below 30 percent of Area Median Income. DCA has provided rental assistance to approximately 1,600 households.

**HELPING COMMUNITIES COPE WITH STORM EXPENSES AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACTS**

**Non-Federal Cost Share (“Match”) Program:** In August 2016, the Christie Administration began accepting applications by local government entities through the Non-Federal Cost Share (“Match”) Program for reimbursement of their local share of FEMA assistance for emergency activities undertaken in the lead-up to Sandy and in the clean-up following the storm. Even though FEMA reimburses 90 percent of these costs, the 10 percent local share resulted in a significant financial burden for communities and their taxpayers. To alleviate this burden, the State now allows local government entities, including municipalities, counties, and school districts, to apply for funds to cover their 10 percent portion for the costs of Sandy debris removal and emergency protective measures. To date, nearly \$31 million has been disbursed to 41 local governments and school districts under the Local Match Program.

**FEMA Community Disaster Loan Program:** Provides funds to eligible communities to assist with governmental functions. These loans assist local governments that have experienced a disaster-related revenue loss that significantly compromises their ability to deliver essential services. The Department of Community Affairs conducted extensive outreach to struggling municipal officials and gained the

Department of Education's cooperation to do the same with school boards. To date, over \$111 million in loan proceeds have been distributed to 60 towns and school districts impacted by Sandy.

**Essential Services Grants:** Assisted Sandy-impacted local governments in funding essential services such as police, public works and education. Approximately \$133 million in Essential Services Grant awards were approved for 20 local governmental entities in the program's three rounds. The local governments included Asbury Park, Atlantic City, Brick, Brigantine Board of Education, Downe, Highlands, Keansburg, Keansburg Board of Education, Lavallette, Lavallette Board of Education, Little Egg Harbor Board of Education, Moonachie, Ocean County, Pinelands Regional Board of Education, Sea Bright, Seaside Heights, Seaside Heights Board of Education, Seaside Park, Toms River Township, and the Toms River Board of Education. All Essential Services Grant awards have been disbursed.

**FEMA Technical Assistance Program:** In order to assist communities with the PA process, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management established the Disaster Recovery Bureau (DRB), a grants management organization, to provide technical assistance to county and local governments as well as other eligible private non-profits. This assistance has included assigning State Applicant Liaisons (SALs) to provide face-to-face guidance through the FEMA process.

**Planning Initiatives:** Helps Sandy-impacted local governments improve their ability to withstand future storms. Planning grants for 50 local governments have been approved, with nearly \$13 million in grants committed. The local governments are making use of the grants to rebuild and develop in ways that reduce the risk of future storm damage and encourage sustainable economic growth, and to leverage other grant funds.

## **DISASTER RECOVERY HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS**

The State's Departments of Human Services, Health and Children & Families have operated dozens of recovery programs and initiatives targeting post-Sandy health and social service needs through the \$227M Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) provided by the federal Department of Health & Human Services. To date, more than \$200 million of SSBG funding has been expended as follows:

- Approximately 60,000 people have received behavioral health screenings
- More than 15,000 people have been screened for increased blood lead levels, including those at highest risk – children under six, pregnant women and professionals working to rebuilding Sandy-affected communities
- Nearly 300 homes with individuals facing home accessibility challenges have been approved for funding through the Ramp Rebuild, Replacement and Installation Program to obtain modular ramps, vertical platforms or stair lifts;
- The Recovery and Rebuilding Initiative has treated more than 3,500 individuals in detox, medically enhanced detox and short-term residential treatment programs.
- Over 7,100 people have received additional legal/financial literacy, psycho-educational and support group services at Family Success Centers.
- Over 5,400 people received assistance through the Nursing Support Program which assures the well-being of children and families that come to the attention of the State as high risk for child health concerns; and
- More than 10,300 people received psychosocial services provided in schools, camps and community locations.

## HELPING NEW JERSEY'S BUSINESSES GET BACK ON THEIR FEET

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority has awarded **\$214 million** to support economic revitalization in Sandy-affected communities through the Stronger NJ Business programs.

- Nearly \$143 million in recovery grants and loans were approved through the *Stronger NJ Business Grant and Loan Programs* to more than 1,200 businesses. To date, the Loan Program has approved 117 small business applications, totaling more than \$86 million in funding. 1,147 businesses received funding through the Grant Program, totaling nearly \$56 million in funding. Cumulatively, 90% of the approved funding for the *Stronger NJ Business Grant and Loan Programs* has been disbursed to 1,255 businesses in the State.
- In addition to grants and loans for local small businesses, the State addressed the need to support the long-term economic recovery of Sandy-impacted communities by funding long-term revitalization priorities. Under the *Stronger NJ Neighborhood and Community Revitalization Program*, \$64 million has been approved for 35 municipal projects to support public improvement projects and streetscape projects. Twenty-nine projects have already broken ground, with the majority of these projects expected to be fully completed by the end of 2017.

## TOURISM RECOVERY

In the years following Superstorm Sandy, New Jersey saw its Shore tourism economy flourish:

- With increased visitation and good summer weather, New Jersey tourism recorded yet another record year in 2016:
  - Tourism demand grew 2.9% in 2016 to reach a new record of \$44.1 billion;
  - Visitation expanded 3.3% compared to 2015; and
  - 2016 marked seven straight years of spending and visitation growth.
- In 2015:
  - New Jersey saw a then record-breaking \$43.4 billion generated by tourism-related demand, a 3.3 percent increase over 2014; and
  - Visitation rose 2.4% compared to 2014.
- In 2014:
  - New Jersey saw a then record-breaking \$42.1 billion generated by tourism-related demand, a 3.8 percent increase over 2013; and
  - Visitation rose 4.4% compared to 2013.
- In 2013, the first summer following Sandy:
  - Tourism demand surpassed \$40 billion, narrowly increasing over pre-Sandy 2012 figures.

## PREPARING NEW JERSEY FOR FUTURE STORMS

### Reinforcing The State's Critical Infrastructure:

**Reconstruction of Route 35:** Route 35 was completely rebuilt in a manner that makes it stronger and better able to withstand future storms. Sandy carried away entire sections of Route 35 and destroyed the highway's drainage system. In July 2013, the Christie Administration broke ground on the \$341

million construction project to completely rebuild Route 35 from the ground up with a pavement design that will last for 50 years, in addition to installing a more robust drainage system. All lanes on Route 35 were completed and opened by summer 2015, with final work on the drainage system, sidewalks, and landscaping finished in early 2016. Significant features of this project included the construction/reconstruction of the following:

- 43 lane-miles of roadway over a 12.5 mile distance;
- A quieter, smoother roadway (compared to the original uneven concrete slabs) with 3 courses of asphalt and an overall roadway pavement depth of 24 inches;
- 9 pump stations with electrical equipment housed in gazebos;
- 33 gravity outfalls;
- Stormwater treatment for all discharge;
- 31.25 miles of drainage lines;
- 20.8 miles of water lines;
- 8.5 miles of sewer lines;
- 13.25 miles of gas line;
- 25 miles of sidewalks;
- 1,200 ADA compliant ramps;
- Bike/shared lanes throughout the length of the project; and
- Providing a greener roadway through extensive landscaping elements.

**Improvement of Electric Distribution Companies' Storm Planning and Response:** In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, the Christie Administration made it a priority to improve energy resiliency, as well as emergency preparedness and response. To improve preparedness and response to future large-scale weather events, the N.J. Board of Public Utilities ordered 103 improvements to be undertaken by the regulated electric companies. The improvements focused on: preparedness efforts, communications, restoration and response, post event and underlying infrastructure issues. To date, every electric company complied with the requirements and did so by the required deadlines.

**Utility Infrastructure Hardening and Resilience Investments:** Shortly after Sandy, the N.J. Board of Public Utilities initiated a Storm Mitigation proceeding with the State's energy companies to find ways to harden New Jersey's utility infrastructure to withstand future storm events. As a result, PSE&G, Rockland Electric, Elizabethtown Gas, New Jersey Natural Gas, and South Jersey Gas all submitted storm mitigation plans to support and strengthen New Jersey's utility infrastructure. For instance, PSE&G invested \$1.2 billion in electric and gas infrastructure hardening measures such as: flood mitigation work at 29 substations, modernizing the company's gas distribution system and installing advanced technologies that spot outages more quickly and deploy crews to repair the damage more swiftly. Additionally, the Board has approved \$1.27 billion in natural gas infrastructure improvement

projects. Not only do these projects improve the reliability of critical utility services, but they also boost the local economy by creating hundreds of well-paying, highly skilled jobs.

**New Jersey Energy Resilience Bank:** As part of the Christie Administration's continuing efforts to minimize the impact of future major power outages and increase energy resiliency, the State established New Jersey Energy Resilience Bank (ERB). The ERB is the first public infrastructure bank in the nation to focus on developing distributed energy resources at critical facilities like wastewater treatment plants and hospitals to allow them to remain operational during future power outages. In addition to strengthening resiliency, the benefits of these energy systems include: more stable energy costs, a cleaner environment through reduced emissions and increased overall efficiency. In total, the Christie Administration has dedicated \$200 million in federal funds toward ERB projects. Thus far, 10 projects for over \$127 million have been approved by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority's Board to move forward in the approval process. The remaining funding is dedicated to energy resilience projects at additional hospitals and water/wastewater treatment plants that are expected to be approved in the coming year.

**FEMA Public Assistance:** More than \$2 billion in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance funds have been obligated to recovery projects submitted by State and local government entities to help repair and rebuild public facilities and infrastructure projects impacted by Superstorm Sandy. More than 1,000 local government units received funding for more than 5,000 total projects.

Approximately 86% of large FEMA Public Assistance projects in the State incorporate mitigation measures, an unprecedented figure showing our commitment to rebuilding better and stronger.

**NJ TRANSIT:** In 2014, NJ TRANSIT was awarded \$1.276 billion in federal funds for five projects designed to strengthen the agency's infrastructure. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) awarded the grants as part of a highly competitive regional competition that included 13 states vying for \$3 billion in total available funding. Projects to better safeguard this critical component of New Jersey's infrastructure include:

- NJ TRANSIT GRID
- Raritan River Drawbridge Replacement
- Hoboken Long Slip Flood Project
- Delco Lead Storage and Inspection Facility
- Signals and Communications Resilience

In addition, NJ TRANSIT is advancing more than 100 other repair and recovery projects resulting from the impact of damage caused by Sandy's storm surge and wind. These projects include the replacement of 163 wooden catenary poles on the Gladstone Line with resilient concrete and steel structures, the poles of which have been already installed; flood barriers to protect building facilities at the Meadows Maintenance Complex; and the replacement of damaged electric substations with structures that better resist storm surge while continuing to provide power.

**Wastewater Treatment:** To address the impacts of Sandy on water and wastewater infrastructure, the State focused efforts to leverage funding for these critical facilities around New Jersey. In 2015, New Jersey received a \$260 million Public Assistance grant for the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission

(PVSC), the largest mitigation grant FEMA has ever issued. To date, the State has received \$443 million in Public Assistance Grants for PVSC. Funding will be used to build a comprehensive flood protection system at the wastewater treatment facility in Newark and incorporate microgrid technology to allow the facility to continue to operate when the larger electric grid fails. Additional funding supporting improvements and resilience at wastewater treatment plants include projects funded through the state Environmental Infrastructure Trust and energy resilience projects that can be funded through the ERB.

**Retail Fuel Station Program:** The Retail Fuel Station (RFS) program allows retail fuel stations faster and more reliable access to back-up power during an energy emergency. Under revised guidelines issued in January 2015, all retail fuel stations statewide with a minimum gasoline capacity of 18,000 gallons were eligible to apply. The voluntary program is funded through the federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Under RFS, 127 stations are fully approved by the EDA for grant funding of \$3.95 million. Of the 127 approved stations, 41 have installed permanent generators and 76 have installed “quick connect” devices, which provide connection points for mobile generators.

### **Strengthening Communities Against Flooding:**

**Beach Restoration and Dunes:** For more than four years, the State has been working closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a massive undertaking to repair and improve beaches, and to build the most comprehensive and continuous coastal protection system it has ever had.

- DEP is working with the Army Corps to build 11 new coastal and flood protection projects statewide. These projects, which will cost more than \$1 billion, will help create an engineered, comprehensive shore protection system along the Atlantic coast, while also bolstering protections on the Delaware Bay coast, Raritan Bay, Sandy Hook Bay and tidal portions of the South River and the Passaic River.
- To date, a \$96.8 million beach and dune construction project in Cape May County (encompassing beaches in southern Ocean City, Upper Township and Sea Isle City) is complete.
- A \$140.4 million project to construct beaches and infrastructure in Monmouth County (Loch Arbour, Allenhurst, Deal and Long Branch) is complete.
- A \$151.8 million beach and dune construction project covering 12.7 miles of beach on Long Beach Island is complete.
- A \$42 million seawall and boardwalk project along Absecon Inlet is under construction in Atlantic City.
- Work has begun on a \$64 million beach and dune construction project on Absecon Island (Longport, Margate, Ventnor and Atlantic City).
- Work has begun on a \$128 million beach and dune project for Northern Ocean County (for all towns from Point Pleasant Beach to Berkeley Township).
- The Army Corps also completed the repair and restoration of all of the pre-Sandy coastal protection projects along the Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic and Cape May counties coastline at a cost of \$345 million.
- The Army Corps and DEP also are advancing studies of other flood-prone areas throughout the State, including South River, Shrewsbury River, the Highlands, NJ/NY Harbor and New Jersey backbay communities.

**Flood Hazard Risk Reduction:** As part of the rebuilding process, the State has prioritized projects that will reduce the risk of flooding from future storm events. The State has leveraged funding from FEMA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Relief Program, the Department of the Interior, the Federal Highway Administration and the State's Shore Protection Fund to help municipalities pay for critical storm resiliency projects. Completed and ongoing projects across the State include:

- [Sea Bright Sea Wall](#)
- [Mantoloking and Brick Steel Sheet Piling](#)
- [Coastal Resiliency Projects](#)
  - Reusing Dredged Material to Restore Salt Marshes and Protect Communities
  - Building Ecological Solutions to Coastal Community Hazards
  - Enhancing Liberty State Park's Marshes and Upland Habitats
- [Comprehensive Flood Mitigation Projects Along The Hackensack & Hudson Rivers](#)
- [Local Flood Risk Reduction Grant Program](#)
- [Belmar's Lake Como Discharge Piping System](#)
- [Brigantine Pump Stations](#)
- [Little Ferry Tide Gate and Pump Station](#)
- Wildwood Stormwater and Flood-Control Project
- North Wildwood Stormwater and Flood-Control Project
- Stone Harbor Stormwater and Storm-Surge Mitigation Project

Additionally, in April 2015, Governor Christie announced a \$202 million resiliency project that will bolster storm protection for Union Beach, which is located along the Raritan Bay, and was one of the communities hardest hit by Superstorm Sandy.

- The massive flood control project – funded by federal, state and local contributions – will consist of construction of levees, floodwalls, tide gates and pump stations. The project will also rebuild beaches, dunes, and groins, which are jetty-like structures that are designed to slow loss of sand from beaches. In addition, more than 25 acres of degraded wetlands will be restored to help better absorb flood waters.

In July 2015, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed dune construction, beach renourishment and groin construction for a \$105 million flood protection project in Port Monmouth. The second phase of the project, which includes construction of levees, a flood wall, tide gates, road closure structures, road raising and pump stations, is underway.

**New Jersey Rebuild by Design (RBD) Projects:** In October 2014, HUD awarded \$380 million to New Jersey for two RBD projects, which must be completed by September 2022. HUD approved this Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery funding as part of its national Rebuild by Design Competition.

- The RBD Hudson River Project (\$230 million) will protect the Hudson River region, including Hoboken and parts of Jersey City and Weehawken. In September 2016, the Christie Administration marked another milestone in making New Jersey more resilient against storms such as Superstorm Sandy by announcing a preferred alignment for construction of the Rebuild by Design Hudson River project. The border between Hoboken and Weehawken and the southern end of Hoboken, adjacent to Jersey City, are low-lying areas that during Superstorm



Sandy acted as funnels for flooding. Storm surge rushed through these two areas and joined forces to cause flooding from the inland side of Hoboken, effectively creating a temporary island on the Hudson River. The flood-resistance structure will provide flood protection for communities and for critical infrastructure, including the North Hudson Sewerage Authority. The flood protection project will be designed to blend in seamlessly with the urban streetscape and enhance the quality of life in the area.

- The RBD Meadowlands Project (\$150 million) will protect Little Ferry, Moonachie, Carlstadt, Teterboro and South Hackensack. The project is currently evaluating three project alternatives and expects to announce a preferred alternative in the fall of 2017.

## **ORGANIZING SANDY VOLUNTEERSHIP AND CHARITABLE EFFORTS**

- The First Lady's Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund raised a total of \$41 million from over 35,000 donors worldwide:
  - 250,000 total New Jersey residents were helped through grants provided by the Relief Fund;
  - 2,265 home repairs and reconstruction completed;
  - \$6.2 million given to 11 Long Term Recovery Groups;
  - 2.5 million meals were delivered to those affected in the aftermath;
  - 1,127 small businesses obtained loans to re-open their doors;
  - 31,274 residents received financial counseling; and
  - 3,060 households were provided with mental health and emotional support service
- Over 350,000 volunteers served in during Sandy recovery. Organizations that were engaged in response and recovery efforts reported the following incredible milestones in just the first year after Sandy:
  - FEMA documented over one million volunteer hours from 48 voluntary agencies;
  - 111 fixed feeding sites and 134 mobile feeding units distributed more than 4 million meals and snacks;
  - More than 395,000 volunteer hours were contributed by the Red Cross in New Jersey;
  - AmeriCorps teams completed the mucking/gutting of 1,340 homes and non-profits;
  - About 30,000 volunteers with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints donated approximately 300,000 hours, directly assisting 3,782 households;
  - Jersey Cares mobilized a total of 11,415 volunteers who contributed over 75,000 service hours;
  - Teams of volunteers from the United Methodist Church contributed more than 58,000 service hours; and
  - Thousands of students at New Jersey's colleges and universities donated untold time and effort to help clean-up and restoration efforts across the State.