

# FEMA - BEST PRACTICES FOR LOWER IMPACT DEBRIS REMOVAL AND DEMOLITIONS New Jersey, Sandy Disaster Response (Version 3.7- 6/6/13)

## • Desktop Review:

- o Prior to any soil disturbing activities all properties will be reviewed using known historic properties and archaeologically sensitive areas. Any identified archaeological sites on or adjacent to the property will have a buffer created by an SOI qualified archaeologist to avoid impacting the known site.

## • General Approach to Minimize Impact to Soil:

- o When using heavy equipment, work from hard or firm surfaces to the fullest extent possible, to avoid sinking into soft soils.

- o The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that its contractors minimize soil disturbance when operating heavy equipment on wet soils (6 inches or less).

- o Excavation and burial of debris on site is not permitted, except where noted below.

## • Activity Specific Guidelines:

- o *Woody Debris Removal (including Rootballs):*

- The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that the removal of uprooted trees, limbs and branches from public rights of way, public area and the transport and disposal of such waste to existing licensed waste facilities or landfills. This includes the temporary establishment and expansion of non-hazardous debris staging, reduction, and disposal areas at licensed transfer stations, or existing hard-topped or graveled surfaces (e.g. parking lots, roads, athletic courts) but not the creation of new or temporary access roads.
- Removal of debris from private property provided that buildings are not affected, ground disturbance is minimal and in-ground elements, such as driveways, walkways or swimming pools are left in place.
- Chipping and disposal of woody debris by broadcasting within existing rights-of-way.
- Removal of uprooted trees and woody debris from the following areas DOES require additional historic review. (Cemeteries, Battlegrounds, Historic landscapes, Historic parks, Undisturbed ground, and Historic districts (but not along public rights-of-way)).

- o *Filling Voids*

- Any voids which require filling because they are a "health and safety issue" will be filled with fill from an approved, established source.

- o *Surface Grading and Site Clean-Up*

- The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that its contractors will limit site grading to within the first six (6) inches of the existing surface elevation (e.g., side walk level, driveway level, slab level, etc.).

- o *Demolition*

- Foundation Removal*

- The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that the contractors will limit excavation to within two (2) feet of the foundation perimeter and will not excavate more than six (6) inches below the depth of the foundation to minimize soil disturbance.

- Slab/Driveway/Sidewalk Removal*

- The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that the contractors will limit excavation to within one (1) foot of the slab/driveway/sidewalk perimeter and will not excavate more than six (6) inches below the depth of the asphalt/concrete to minimize soil disturbance.

- Oil Tank Location/Removal*

- The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that approved methods will be used in locating an underground oil tank. Approved methods include using a magnetometer, probe, or GPR system. Trenches are not permitted.
- The Applicant will inform, to the fullest extent possible, landowner's of best practice guidelines for oil tank removal and they are made aware of the NJDEP spill hotline and state regulations for contamination remediation. Best practices for tank removal would be to use smaller machines with approximately two (2) foot wide buckets for excavation to reduce potential soil disturbance.

*Septic Tanks*

- The Applicant will ensure, to the fullest extent possible, that fill required in the decommissioning of septic tanks is from an approved, established source.

*o If the building or structure has been destroyed by the event and there are remaining Structural Features or Utilities that Require Removal, then:*

- Utility lines will be disconnected and capped. In cases where there are no shut-off valves, limited excavation within the utility rights-of-way will be required to cap these service lines.
- Shearing off of at the ground-surface is strongly encouraged so that further soil disturbance is minimized.

**• Treatment of Unanticipated Discoveries:**

*o Archaeological Materials/Human Remains*

- If debris removal activities disturb archaeological artifacts (e.g. old bricks, ceramic pieces, historic bottle glass or cans, coins, beads, stones in the form of tools [arrow heads], pieces of crude clay pottery, etc.), archaeological features (e.g. grave markers, house foundations, cisterns, etc.) or human remains the Applicant will ensure to the fullest extent possible that the Contractor immediately stops work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. In such cases, the Applicant will immediately inform the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office SHPO and FEMA (also the local law enforcement, county corner/medical examiner and county OEM representative for human remains, in accordance with applicable New Jersey SHPO and state guidelines) of the discovery for further guidance. The Applicant will ensure that the Contractor does not proceed with work in the areas of concern until FEMA staff has completed consultation with the (SHPO) and other interested parties, as necessary.
- To ensure that all applicable State and local laws are adhered to, and permission from all appropriate parties is obtained to remove remains, the Applicant must also determine appropriate legal measures under New Jersey Cemetery law (N.J.S.A. 45:27-23.c).

**FEMA reserves the right to conduct unannounced field inspections and observe debris removal activities to verify compliance with LIDRS. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize the Applicant's receipt of federal funding.**

**FEMA and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) have agreed that the Applicant is responsible for ensuring that their demolition contractor adheres to these work restrictions known as Best Practices For Lower Impact Debris Removal and Demolitions for FEMA Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program eligible activities.**