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\$9.6M in federal Sandy aid to benefit sewage plant, state transportation department



In this November file photo, Joe Perno, a maintenance foreman, works to repair one of the air compressors at the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission treatment plant damaged during Hurricane Sandy. (John Munson/The Star-Ledger)

By Erin O'Neill/The Star-Ledger on August 26, 2013 at 7:29 PM

More than \$9.6 million in federal Hurricane Sandy relief aid has been awarded to the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission and the New Jersey Department of Transportation to help defray costs incurred because of the Oct. 29 storm.

U.S. Sen. Robert Menendez, (D-N.J.), announced today that a nearly \$8.2 million grant will help with repairs and cleanup at the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission treatment plant in Newark. Another \$1.4 million will reimburse the state transportation department for hiring contractors to use sonar technology to identify hazardous debris in navigation channels along the state's coastline, the Democratic senator said.

The funding comes from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Public Assistance grant program. The federal agency covers 90 percent of the cost of a project under that program.

In a written statement, Menendez said the grants help pay for "restoring critical public facilities and utilities damaged" by Sandy, adding that the aid "not only helps the agencies that receive it, but also helps the entire state continue on its path to full recovery from the storm."

Passaic Valley's plant — the nation's fifth largest sewage treatment facility — was inundated by Sandy's storm surge.

The public assistance grant includes nearly \$1.2 million to remove debris, roughly \$3 million to repair a primary clarifier facility, more than \$1.7 million to repair the sludge storage and decant facilities and more than \$2.2 million to repair the underground tunnel facilities.