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Sandy relief grant announced to fix sewage sludge thickener

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FEMA awarded the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission a \$2.3 million grant to fix a sludge thickening facility damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Steve Strunsky/The Star-Ledger

NEWARK — Federal grants to help provide relief to New Jerseyans after Hurricane Sandy were announced today, including \$2.3 million to repair a sewage sludge thickener at the badly damaged Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission Plant in Newark.

A second, \$1 million grant, also by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, was announced, to help the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey repair a barge that was damaged during last October's storm.

The grants were announced jointly by New Jersey's two U.S. Senators, Republican Jeff Chiesa and Democrat Robert Menendez.

“Our recovery is continuing with the help of federal Sandy relief grants like these that help major agencies recover some of the funds spent in restoring services and functions after the storm,” Menendez said in a statement.

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Chiesa added: “I commend FEMA for their continued attention to the New Jersey recovery and providing our cities and towns with the resources they desperately need.”

In January, President Obama signed the Superstorm Sandy Supplemental Appropriations bill into law, bringing the total Sandy aid enacted by Congress to \$60.2 billion.

Officials estimated the PVSC plant - the fifth largest in the country - sustained more than \$200 million in damage when it was flooded by surge from Newark Bay. Port Authority officials said Sandy cost the agency "billions" of dollars in damage and lost revenues.