

**Florida Division of Emergency Management  
Private Property Debris Removal Quick Guide  
Environmental Compliance Criteria**

Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), Public Assistance (PA) Program, is providing this information to **avoid jeopardizing applicants' eligibility for reimbursement** from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for debris removal and disposal. Debris may include downed trees, silt, sand, building components, wreckage, and personal property. Debris must be separated for proper handling, transport and disposal of hazardous materials and toxic waste including asbestos containing materials, lead-based paints, and household chemicals.

FEMA may reimburse reasonable costs associated with debris removal, such as labor, disposal fees, monitoring costs, equipment costs, material costs, or contract costs. Contracts must comply with federal regulations (2 CFR 200.320) as well as State and local procurement standards.

When the criteria below are met, PPDR is less likely to have an adverse effect on natural resources or historic properties. Following these criteria will remove the requirement for environmental compliance review prior to the start of private property debris removal.

The Applicant may remove and collect debris, including the transport and disposal, from private properties providing the criteria below are met:

- Debris is taken to existing licensed solid waste facilities or landfills, licensed transfer stations, or a pre-approved temporary debris staging site, reduction site or disposal area.
- No new or temporary access roads are built to support removal operations.
- No structures or facilities, including damaged structures, are affected.
- Ground disturbance is minimal and minimized (e.g., avoid tire rutting, scraping, mechanized debris removal) and in-ground elements, such as driveways, walkways, swimming pools, and tree root balls, are left in place. Use vehicles with rubber wheels or tracks to minimize ground disturbance.
- Limit work with the potential to cause subsurface impacts in extremely saturated soil conditions or areas inundated with standing water.
- Heavy equipment should be limited to existing rights-of-way or hardened surfaces wherever possible. Loading vehicles and equipment should be staged and conducted on paved or graveled surfaces when safety isn't a concern.
- No listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat is present in the removal or disposal areas or will be indirectly impacted.
- Prior coordination with FEMA is required prior to debris removal from waterways, lakes, streams, ponds or other natural or manmade water features or from marine or beach environments, including sand dunes.
- Prior coordination with FEMA is required prior to debris removal in Coastal Barrier Resource Units.
- Prior coordination with FEMA is required prior to demolition or standing tree removal.

PPDR is prohibited in areas designated as federally protected critical habitat, if threatened or listed species are present in the project area, or if species or habitat may be indirectly harmed by the activities. To determine if threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat, may be present in your county, refer to the United States Fish and Wildlife's Service website here: <https://www.fws.gov/angered/> or contact your state agency with the responsibility to oversee the protection and recovery of threatened and endangered species.

PPDR should not occur in coastal areas within designated Coastal Barrier Resource Units without prior coordination and approval from FEMA. A map of the Coastal Barrier Resource System Units may be accessed here: <https://www.fws.gov/CBRA/maps/index.html>. Note, these maps are only representations of the official Coastal Barrier Resource System boundaries and are not to be considered authoritative. If the property in question is in or near a mapped area contact FEMA for further coordination.