Preliminary Damage Assessment
(PDA)
Field Guide
INDIVIDUAL

ASSISTANCE
The Purpose of this Preliminary Damage Assessment Field Guide

This field guide has been designed to serve as a quick reference tool to be utilized by local officials and others in conducting local damage assessment for homes and businesses. Inside you will find listed the 4 Degrees of Damage; FEMA criteria for seeking an Individual Assistance Declaration and tips – things to do and things to remember. In addition, illustrations have been provided and offer examples of the different degrees of damage for both wind and flood.
Local Damage Assessment Must be Rapid, Detailed and Accurate.

- It should be completed and Submitted to the State within 36 hours of the event.
- The data collected will then be analyzed to determine if supplemental assistance will be needed from the State and/or Federal Agencies.
- If necessary, the State will request a joint preliminary damage assessment with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and/or the Small Business Administration (SBA).
- Delay in completing the assessment may delay supplemental disaster assistance to those most in need.
Why Do Damage Assessment?

Conducting a local damage assessment enables local officials to:

- Determine the severity and Magnitude of the event.
- Quantify homes and businesses Impacted by the disaster.
- Determine whether local resources will be sufficient to effectively respond and recover from the event.
There are 4 degrees of damage:

- Destroyed
- Major
- Minor
- Affected
**Criteria** for requesting assistance from SBA:

*There must be a minimum of twenty five (25) homes and/or businesses with 40% uninsured damages.*

Note: Generally, structures with either “Destroyed” or “Major” degree of damage will meet “40% uninsured damages” criteria.
**DO:**

- Conduct visual inspection to verify damages.
- Be sensitive when discussing damages with property owner.
- Determine extent of insurance coverage (i.e. homeowner’s policy vs. flood insurance).
- Include impact to businesses in your survey.
- Ensure current assessment reports are as accurate as possible.
- Know that exaggeration of amount of damage will be detrimental during a joint PDA.
- Provide detailed assessment to HSEM within 36 hours of the event.
REMEMBER

- Focus on degrees of damage and habitability.
- Do not become preoccupied with property value.
- Look for waterline or debris line to determine depth of water.
- Only report disaster-related damages.
- Deferred maintenance and/or pre-existing damage should not be included in your assessment.

Based on criteria, make a judgment call.
SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING
Wind Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Minimal damage to structure and home is habitable, requiring minimal repairs.
Examples:
- Some shingle damage.
- Few broken windows.
- Cosmetic damage to siding.
- Repairable.
Wind Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Damage may be repaired within 30 days making the structure habitable. Examples:
- Windows/doors are damaged and unsecurable.
- Damage to functional components (furnace, water heater, HVAC).
Wind Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Significant structural damages requiring longer than 30 days for repair. Examples:

- Structural failure of walls, roof and foundation which are repairable.
- Damage to windows, doors and exterior walls.
- Extensive debris and utility problems.
Wind Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Structure is a total loss and damage is to such an extent that repair is not feasible and has left the home permanently uninhabitable.

Examples:
- Complete failure of two or more structural components, such as collapse of basement walls/foundation, walls or roof.
- Only foundation remains.
- Condemned structure that will require demolition or removal by local government due to disaster related health and safety concerns.
WIND DAMAGE

MOBILE HOME
Wind Damage: Mobile Home

Minimal damages to the dwelling and/or contents and is **habitable**, requiring minimal repairs.

Examples:
- Frame is NOT bent, twisted or otherwise compromised.
- No structural components have been damaged.
Wind Damage: Mobile Home

Damages may be **repaired within 30 days** making the structure habitable.
Examples:
- Minor structural damage (not displaced from foundation).
- Other structural components may have minor damage (windows, roof, doors, duct work, etc.)
Wind Damage: Mobile Home

Significant structural damages requiring **longer than 30 days for repair**. Extensive repairs will be required to become habitable.

Examples:
- Displaced from foundation.
- Other structural components have been damaged (windows, doors, wall coverings, roof, bottom board insulation, utility hook-up, etc.)
Structure is a total loss. There is no value associated with the structure except for its basic material content (scrap).
Examples:
- Frame is bent, twisted or otherwise compromised.
- Missing roof or has sustained significant damage to roof covering, sheathing, and framing.
FLOOD DAMAGE

SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING
Minimal damage to the structure and/or contents and is **habitable, requiring minimal repairs.**

Examples:
- Minimal flooding with less than 3" in an occupied or required room.
Flood Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Damages may be repaired within 30 days making the structure habitable. Examples:
- 3” – 18” of water in an occupied or required room.
- Damage or disaster related contamination to private well or septic system.
Flood Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Significant structural damages requiring longer than 30 days for repair. Examples:

- 18” or more of water on the first floor or water that covers the electrical outlets.
- Water in the basement which compromises the structural integrity of the home.
DESTROYED

Flood Damage: Single Family Dwelling

Structure that is a **total loss** and damage is to such an extent that repair is not feasible and has left the home **permanently uninhabitable**. Examples:

- Complete failure of two or more major structural components, such as collapse of basement walls/foundation, walls or roof.
- Only foundation remains.
- A structure that will require removal or demolition by local government due to a confirmed imminent danger, such as impending landslides, mudslides or sinkholes.
FLOOD DAMAGE

MOBILE HOME
Minimal damage to the dwelling and/or contents and is **habitable, requiring minimal repairs**.

Examples:
- No damages affecting habitability.
- Cosmetic damage only.
Flood Damage: Mobile Home

Damages may be **repaired within 30 days** making the structure habitable. Examples:
- Water line is below the floor system.
- Skirting or HVAC may be impacted.
Flood Damage: Mobile Home

Significant structural damages requiring **longer than 30 days for repair.** Extensive repairs will be required to become habitable.

Examples:
- Water that impacts the floor system (belly board insulation, duct work, subfloor).
- Water line up to 12 inches in the living area.
Flood Damage: Mobile Home

Structure is a **total loss**. There is no value associated with the structure except for its basic material content (scrap).
Examples:
- Water line is higher than 12 inches.
- Frame twisted, bent or otherwise compromised.
- Interior so compromised by contamination that cleanup is infeasible.
PUBLIC

ASSISTANCE
Public Assistance Damage Assessment Criteria

- Damaged facility must belong to one of the following:
  - State or local government
  - Public entity
  - Town, village or rural community
  - Tribal government
  - Eligible private non-profit

- Facility was damaged due to the event

- Damaged elements are maintained and were in use at the time of the event

- Be sure to collect the impacts that the damages had on the community. Include information that details:
  - Threats to health or safety that is a result of the damage
  - General impact the loss of the facility has on the community
## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

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<td><strong>Debris Removal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Emergency Protective Measures</strong></td>
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| Debris removal must be in the public interest and necessary to: | - Search and rescue  
- Security  
- Emergency Pumping  
- Sandbagging  
- Detour & warning signs  
- EOC Activation  
- Emergency & temporary repairs  
- Overhead power lines  
- Emergency medical facilities  
- Emergency evacuations  
- Activities undertaken before, during and after a disaster to save lives and protect improved property |
|   - Eliminate immediate threats to lives, public health & safety;  
   - Eliminate immediate threats of significant damage to improved public or private property |   |
| **Examples:** |  |
|   - Trees and woody debris  
   - Building components  
   - Sand, mud, silt & gravel  
   - Removal of temporary levees |  |
## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

### Category C

**Roads & Bridges**

- Roads
  - Surfaces
  - Bases
  - Shoulders
  - Ditches
  - Drainage structures
  - Low water crossings

- Bridges
  - Decking & pavement
  - Piers
  - Girders
  - Abutments
  - Slope protection
  - Approaches

### Slope Failures

### Category D

**Water Control Facilities**

- Dams & reservoirs
- Levees
- Engineered drainage channels
- Canals
- Aqueducts
- Sediment basins
- Shore protective devices
- Irrigation facilities
- Pumping facilities
### PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

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- Substations
- Power lines
Category G

Parks, Recreation & Other

Playground equipment
Swimming pools
Bath houses
Tennis courts
Boat docks
Piers
Picnic tables
Golf courses
Fish hatcheries
Mass transit facilities