



**FEMA**

# News Release

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## **REMEMBER TO GET YOUR PERMITS WHEN REPAIRING AND REBUILDING**

**BURLINGTON, Vt.** – State and federal recovery officials are reminding Vermonters repairing damage to their homes or businesses from Tropical Storm Irene that they must still get the appropriate building permits before beginning any repair or rebuilding work.

Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) officials stress that when there is any doubt, residents or business owners should contact their town or city to find out what permits are needed, if any.

“With winter approaching, we want Vermonters to begin rebuilding and repairing damage from Irene as soon as possible, but to make sure that local and state processes are followed,” said Vermont Emergency Management Director Mike O’Neil. “If you are not sure, please take the time to contact local officials. It can save you a lot of headaches down the road.”

Many municipalities require builders to get appropriate construction permits before they launch any rebuilding or significant repair project. If proper permits are not obtained, residents may be subject to stop work orders, fines and penalties. Municipalities could potentially lose FEMA funding for their projects if they do not comply with permitting requirements.

Other information to keep in mind about permits includes:

- Permits may be required for work on removing or replacing the roof, walls, siding, wallboard, plaster, insulation, paneling, cabinets, flooring, electrical system, plumbing, heating or air conditioning and elevating structures. Repair projects must meet municipal and state building codes and ordinances.
- Permits assure residents and communities that all proposed work complies with current codes, standards, flood ordinances and recommended construction techniques.
- Local, state and federal agencies can provide suggestions and information on how to protect your home or business from future disaster-related damages.
- Those agencies may also provide consumers with information on selecting licensed contractors as well as advice on protecting themselves from unscrupulous contractors.

**(MORE)**

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency and VEM do not recommend or endorse any contractors, and recovery officials warn people to be wary of any contractors who claim they are authorized by the agencies. They are not.

*FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders and to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.*

*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). Those with a speech disability or hearing loss who use a TTY may call 1-800-462-7585 directly; or call 1-800-621-3362 if using 711 or Video Relay Service (VRS).*

*FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA loan officers to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.*

*SBA disaster loan information and application forms may be obtained by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 800-659-2955 (800-877-8339 for people with speech or hearing disabilities) Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET; Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. ET or by sending an e-mail to [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov). Applications can also be downloaded from [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov) or completed on-line at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/>.*

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