

## **Ashe County Private Property Debris Removal Program**

Starting on February 1, Ashe County property owners impacted by Hurricane Helene, may apply to have qualified disaster debris removed from their property **at no cost** through the Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) Program. The program also covers the demolition of eligible unsafe structures.

### **What is eligible in the PPDR program?**

- Removal of hazardous limbs, trees, uprooted stumps or other mixed debris caused by Hurricane Helene that is:
  - near a commonly used area or maintained areas of a property
  - not in a maintained area but threatens infrastructure or homes.
- Removal of debris impacting around waterways, up to the water's edge.
- Removal of debris on, adjacent, or threatening a private road.
- The demolition and removal of a structure that is a health hazard, deemed unfit/unsafe, and may not be recoverable, or is in threat of collapse. This may include concrete slabs.

*\*Note: hazardous trees include standing trees that are leaning more than 30 degrees or have lost more than 50% of the tree canopy.*

### **What is NOT eligible under the program?**

- Debris on vacant lots, unimproved property, and unused or unmaintained areas.
- Debris on land used primarily for agricultural purposes, such as land for crops or livestock.

### **Required Documentation**

A Right of Entry (ROE) form, signed by all property owners, **is legally required** before contractors providing PPDR and/or demolition can access the owner's private property. A right-of-entry is a voluntary document. Your land is private, and it is your decision to grant access. You may withdraw from the program at any time prior to the start of debris removal or demolition activities on your property. Private roads maintained by homeowner's associations must provide ROE forms signed by the individual authorized to act on behalf of the association.

### **How to Apply**

To determine if you are eligible for debris removal or the demolition of unsafe structures on your property, visit The Family Central (near the Disaster Recovery Center) **PPDR Application Center**, located at **626 Ashe Central School Road, Jefferson, NC. 28640. February 1 9a-2pm February 3 9a-6pm, February 4 10a-7pm**

## **New Application Intake Dates will be announced after the February 5.**

Depending on the demand/need, additional dates will be scheduled.

Application documents must be submitted in-person. Please have the following documents available when visiting the intake center:

- A copy of your insurance policy and/or declarations page.
- A copy of a utility bill from the time of the event (i.e. water, gas, power, etc.).
- Your driver's license or valid U.S. government-issued ID (such as a passport).
- Proof of ownership such as a copy of the Ashe County property card or copy of the property tax bill.
- Power of attorney or legal documents to give signature authority if you are not the owner.
- A simple sketch of the property identifying the locations of debris (hand-drawn is fine). Please include anything that you do not wish to have removed (i.e. a pile of wood being saved for firewood).
- For building demolition only: a copy of the warranty deed.

### **Other Common FAQs**

**What is the Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) program?** The PPDR program is designed to speed recovery by helping property owners impacted by disasters, who do not have debris removal insurance or Insurance does not cover complete debris removal, by removing eligible disaster debris or demolishing unsafe, unrecoverable structures, on their property at no cost. Properties located within Ashe County are eligible for the program if they have qualified debris on them or demolition of an unsafe structure.

**What is Right of Entry (ROE)?** A Right of Entry (ROE) is a form that, when properly executed, provides the contractors with permission to enter the private property to provide the requested services.

#### **There are three parts to a ROE for private property:**

1. **Right of Entry form:** grants property access to contractors, and subcontractors for inspecting and removing eligible storm-generated debris or demolishing any eligible unsafe, unrecoverable structures.
2. **Hold Harmless Agreement:** releases the town, state, their agencies, contractors, and subcontractors for damages, either to the property or persons situated thereon, and waives any action which might arise during inspection, debris removal and/or demolition.
3. **Non-Duplication of Benefits:** states any money you received from your insurance agency, specifically for debris removal or demolition on your property, must be

returned to the government if you received it and did not spend it on debris removal/demolition services.

**Why do I have to apply in-person at the intake center? Why isn't there an on-line option?** The intake specialist must review the form with each applicant and verify the individual signing the ROE form is the property owner. The ROE form also requires a wet signature and may not be filed electronically.

**I live on a private road that needs debris collection, is the process the same?** The process for collection on a private road is simpler. For roads not already maintained by a homeowners' association (HOA), a property owner only needs to call or report the road to town hall. Town staff will contact the debris removal contractor who will visit the road to determine if special equipment will be required and will then schedule the removal.

For roads maintained by an HOA, a separate ROE form must be executed by the individual authorized to act on behalf of the association and brought in for signups. Once the ROE is received, work can be scheduled.

**What if one or more property owners are not available to sign the ROE form?** The intake specialist will review the most practical option(s) with the applicant to obtain the necessary authority to move forward with a complete application. If a property owner is unable to visit an intake center, they may call the PPDR intake number at (501) 604-6453 to speak with a specialist.

**Who determines eligibility?** The designated inspector will conduct a review. FEMA ultimately determines eligibility.

**Is commercial property eligible for the program?** Commercial properties are generally allowable. Eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

**If I have homeowner's insurance, can I still participate in the PPDR program?** To avoid a duplication of benefits, your insurance company may be required to provide payment from your policy, designated for your debris removal or demolition, to the county. If you have already received a benefits payment from your insurance company for work you are requesting from the county, you may be requested to reimburse that portion. Please discuss this with the intake specialist.

**Can I use my debris removal insurance to remove items ineligible under the program?** Yes. If you have a specified amount for debris removal in your insurance policy, you may use those proceeds to remove debris that is ineligible under the PPDR program. The town will only collect remaining insurance proceeds, if any, after you have paid to remove your ineligible debris.

### **What is the timeline after I submit my completed ROE?**

1. Intake specialists will review your ROE document with the applicant and will verify all property owners have signed.
2. A site inspection will be scheduled.\*
3. Eligible hazards will be documented and submitted for approval.
4. The assigned contractor will begin debris removal and/or demolition services.
5. Once the contractor is done removing the debris, a final inspection is performed to verify work is complete and property is returned to the pre-debris removal condition.

\*If your property has been approved for the demolition of a structure, additional site visits may be required to test for asbestos, review surrounding environmental conditions, and disconnect utilities (property owner is responsible for having utilities disconnected). The county and/or its contractors will keep you informed of the progress.

### **Does this change anything related to the debris collection occurring along public**

**roads?** No. Debris collection along our public roads will continue. The PPDR program is a new, additional service for private property owners who have large amounts, or difficult to reach debris that cannot be reasonably managed by the property owner. Property owners with smaller amounts of debris may prefer to continue to bring their material to the road for collection, rather than execute a ROE that would authorize large equipment to enter their property.

**What about common areas managed by an HOA/POA, are these areas eligible?** Yes. As with private roads managed by an HOA/POA, the individual who is authorized to act on behalf of the community will need to meet with an intake specialist and execute the ROE.