

**From:** Good Jobs New York <elizabeth@goodjobsfirst.org>

**Subject:** Hurricane Sandy Weekly News Round-up: In response to growing legal concerns, FEMA commits to reforming National Flood Insurance Program

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*With many issues still unresolved in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Good Jobs New York is keeping the spotlight on government money in the rebuilding process. For more on opportunities for community involvement, follow us on Twitter @GoodJobsNewYork #EyeOnSandyMoney. And let us know how we can make this alert better.*

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## Keeping an Eye on Hurricane Sandy Recovery Money Weekly News Round-up: December 4 - 11

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### This Week's News

#### Disaster Relief

Federal magistrate judges from Brooklyn and Long Island ordered insurance companies to disclose all drafts of engineering and adjusters' reports to Sandy victims by December 12; a hearing is set for January 28 to consider allegations of widespread use of falsified reports by the insurers. [Insurance Journal](#) and [New York Law Journal](#)

ALSO: FEMA has committed to reforming an aspect of the National Flood Insurance Program that may incentivize private insurance companies to under-pay claims. About 1,500 Sandy-related cases are currently being litigated. [Newsworks](#)

ALSO: Senator Menendez (D-NJ) promised to convene a task force with members of Congress, FEMA officials, and insurance industry experts to investigate and address concerns that homeowners have been shortchanged by insurance companies. FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate committed to take action to penalize any insurance company that underpaid policyholders; FEMA will also reopen appeals from 270 policyholders. The Department of Homeland Security Inspector General will investigate allegations. [The Record](#) and [Insurance Journal](#)

The Standard Fire Insurance Co., a unit of Travelers Co., is being sued by New York homeowners who claim it used an altered engineering report as the basis for rejecting their flood damage claim. [Insurance Journal](#)

Hartford Financial Services is another insurance company being sued by homeowners who claim

the insurer denied their damage claim based on an altered engineering report. [Business Week](#)

During the Sandy relief effort, Red Cross responders were told by senior officials of the organization not to interact with Occupy Sandy, despite the fact that the group was widely recognized for its quick and well-organized response to the disaster. [ProPublica](#)

Holly Leicht, Department of Housing and Urban Development Regional Administrator for NY and NJ describes the agency's role in Sandy rebuilding and explains why HUD has spent only 12% of its Sandy allocation so far. [The Guardian](#)

FEMA is seeking to recoup disaster relief funds from 1,200 New Jersey residents after the agency mistakenly sent money to individuals later found to be ineligible. Senator Menendez is proposing legislation to protect Sandy victims who filed for assistance from having to pay money back. [CBS Local](#)

U.S. Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand (both D-NY) [announced](#) \$336 million in FEMA public assistance funds will go to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel and Queens Midtown Tunnel for repairs due to flooding during Sandy.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers approved \$128 million for a contract to Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company to perform beach replenishment activities on Long Beach Island, NJ. [CT Post](#)

The MTA awarded a \$193 million contract to Judlau Contracting to rehabilitate the South Ferry subway station which was flooded during Sandy. The renovation will protect the station from future storms and make it ADA compliant. [Progressive Railroading](#)

## **Rebuilding Infrastructure and Resiliency**

New research will model what the impacts of Sandy would have been on the electrical grid if temperatures were warmer, and how utilities can prepare for future storms and climate change. [Utility Dive](#)

In an opinion article supportive of LinkNYC, the author writes that increasing wireless connectivity and strengthening digital communication infrastructure is vital to ensuring an equitable response to disasters. [City Limits](#)

This blog provides an overview of Mayor de Blasio's track record on infrastructure and real estate, post-Sandy. [New York Real Estate Journal](#)

Smart meters, solar power generation and storage batteries are some of the best technology investments utilities can make now to be prepared for future storms. [Tech Crunch](#)

Gov. Christie issued a proclamation thanking 800 Canadian utility workers for helping restore power in New Jersey after Sandy. [NJ Advance](#)

Despite Gov. Christie's 2010 veto of a new tunnel connecting New Jersey and New York, results of a recent poll show that a majority of New Jersey residents from every part of the state support a new tunnel, particularly with recent news that existing tunnels will need to be closed for major repairs due to Sandy damage. [NJ Advance](#)

Documentation of how communities continue to weigh in on the Rebuild by Design process. [How We Get to Next](#)

**Subscribe to the new Build it Back newsletter for regular updates of the city's progress with housing recovery efforts.**

## Events

List your upcoming event here! Email [elizabeth@goodjobsfirst.org](mailto:elizabeth@goodjobsfirst.org)

### Regional Events

Ongoing, citywide: [New York Free Disaster Assistance Legal Clinics](#).

Upcoming free webinars on Disaster Preparedness and Economic recovery through [RestoreYourEconomy.org](#):

Do you have a group interested in helping with the Sandy rebuild? Check out [this list](#) of ongoing service opportunities to help with hurricane Sandy rebuilding and revitalization.

### Brooklyn

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10:00-3:00: [Jubilee Legal Clinic](#), Coney Island Gospel Assembly, 2828 Neptune Avenue. Visit website for additional hours and information including income requirements.

## Advocacy Reports

Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development: [Social Resiliency and Superstorm Sandy: Lessons from New York City Community Organizations](#)

LES Ready!: [Getting LES Ready: Learning from Hurricane Sandy to create a community-based disaster plan for the future](#)

Center for Disaster Philanthropy; Council of New Jersey Grantmakers; Foundation Center; Philanthropy New York: [Philanthropy and Hurricane Sandy: A Report on the Foundation and Corporate Response](#). A new report looks at the role of philanthropy in the response to Hurricane Sandy and how contributions help fund community advocacy, social services and other redevelopment planning processes.

Union of Concerned Scientists: [Encroaching Tides: How Sea Level Rise and Tidal Flooding Threaten U.S. East and Gulf Coast Communities over the Next 30 Years](#)

The Center for New York City Neighborhoods: [Rising Tides, Rising Costs](#)

[FloodHelpNY](#) is a dynamic map that allows users to find out what their flood insurance rate will be when new federal flood maps are available in 2016 and provides links to information on purchasing flood insurance.

NYU Furman Center: [The Price of Resilience: Can Multifamily Housing Afford to Adapt?](#)

[Stakeholder Engagement Report: Environmental Justice Climate Change Preparedness in New Jersey](#) [to view the report, follow the link and click on 'Environmental Justice']

The New York League of Conservation Voters: [Taking Stock: Sustainability and Resiliency](#)

## Progress during Mayor de Blasio's First Six Months

The International Economic Development Council released a guide to help local economies recovering from a disaster: [Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency](#)

New York Communities for Change: [Thousands of Homeowners Still Drowning in Underwater Mortgages: How Toxic Loans Keep Fueling Foreclosures and the Need for Eminent Domain](#)

Risky Business Project: [American Climate Prospectus: Economic Risks in the United States](#)

Report from the ClimateWorks Foundation and the World Bank - [Climate-Smart Development: Adding up the benefits of actions that help build prosperity, end poverty and combat climate change.](#)

Fifth Avenue Committee, [Guidelines to Building Resiliency](#)

North Star Fund, [From The Edge Of Disaster: How Activists and Insiders Can Use the Lessons of Hurricane Sandy to Make the City Safer](#)

New York League of Conservation Voters [Three Point Action Plan](#) to address New York City's most pressing environmental and resiliency challenges

Natural Resources Defense Council: [Preparing for Climate Change: Lessons Learned for Coastal Cities from Hurricane Sandy](#). This report analyzes FEMA flood maps to reveal that the maps did not account for 65% of the area that was actually inundated by Sandy.

For more advocacy resources, visit Good Jobs New York's [Keeping an Eye on Hurricane Sandy Recovery Money](#)

## **Federal, State & Local Resources**

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of the Inspector General audit: [The City of New York, Office of Management and Budget, administration of CDBG -DR Assistance Funds awarded to the city.](#)

Northeast-Midwest Institute: [Building a Climate-Resilient Great Lakes: Federal Resources and Assistance for State and Local Governments](#)

New York City Economic Development Corporation and New York City Department of City Planning: [Water Street: Transforming Water Street's Privately Owned Public Spaces \(POPS\)](#)

Office of the New York City Comptroller, [On the Frontlines: \\$129 billion in property at risk from flood waters](#)

New York City Department of Environmental Protection, [Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan\[update\]](#)

New York City Department of City Planning: [Retrofitting Buildings for Flood Risk](#)

Urban Justice Center's [Mental Health Project](#)

Office of the New York City Comptroller, [A Green Bond Program for New York City](#)

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General: [Hospital Emergency Preparedness and Response During Superstorm Sandy](#)

Swiss Re report: "[The Big One: The East Coast's USD 100 billion hurricane event](#)"

[Government Accountability Office audit](#) outlining opportunities to enhance FEMA efficiency in operations.

The [New York Recovery Network](#) provides links to disaster relief funding programs, regional trainings and events, and other news and related information on statewide Sandy recovery. Website registration is required.

[New York City's Quarterly Performance Report to HUD](#), April-June 2014.

U.S. Energy Information Administration, [Flood Vulnerability Assessment Map](#)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: [Sea Level Rise and Nuisance Flood Frequency Changes around the United States](#)

New York City Comptroller's Office: [Audit Report on the New York City Housing Authority's Section 3 and Resident Employment Programs](#)

New York City Comptroller's Office released the annual [ClaimStat report](#) along with interactive maps which reveal claims against the city as reported to five city agencies, including sewer overflow claims from 2012-13 reported to the New York City Department of Environmental Protection.

New York City Comptroller's Office: [Audit Report](#) on the Department of Homeless Services' Oversight of Contractors Hired to Assist Individuals and Families Displaced by Hurricane Sandy

RISE:NYC, a competition to innovate technologies that will help prepare small businesses for climate change, announced 37 finalists. To read more about the finalists and links to competition updates see the [NYCEDC blog](#)

The Canarsie Coalition prepared a [resource guide](#) including contact information for organizations and individuals involved in addressing unmet needs in Canarsie, Brooklyn.

[LawHelpNY.org](#) launched a mobile site to provide mobile access to information and referrals for low-income New Yorkers seeking help with problems in areas such as housing, family law, consumer debt and immigration.

The Center for NYC Neighborhoods in partnership with the New York State Attorney General, hosts a [Homeowner Hotline](#), a confidential service available to answer housing counseling or legal questions. 311 in New York City, or 855-HOME-456.

New York City Office of Emergency Management [Know Your Zone Hurricane Preparedness website](#).

New York Rising Community Reconstruction Final Plans are now available: <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/nycrcr/final-plans>

One City, Rebuilding Together: A Report on the City of New York's Response to Hurricane Sandy and the Path Forward.

The Program Management Office of the Hurricane Sandy Task Force released its monthly report [pdf] on how 19 federal agencies have so far spent funding from the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013.

A helpful visual guide to the agencies and key decision-makers distributing federal disaster relief funds.

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City (a private 501-c3) released an update of how the funds it raised for Sandy aid have been allocated.

Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Task Force report, Hurricane Sandy Rebuilding Strategy: Stronger Communities, A Resilient Region

ALSO: Good Jobs New York provides a critique of the federal Task Force recommendations in a three-part blog series.

For more resources, visit Good Jobs New York's Keeping an Eye on Hurricane Sandy Recovery Money

### **We'd love to hear from you!**

Check out our resources on Hurricane Sandy money at our website. Or follow us on Twitter: @GoodJobsNewYork #EyeOnSandyMoney. Please forward your suggestions on how we can make this round-up more useful to you in your work.

### **Contact us**

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