

Keeping an eye on Hurricane Sandy recovery dollars Weekly News Round-up: March 28-April 4

With a high volume of media coverage in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Good Jobs New York is keeping the spotlight on how government money is proposed to be spent in the rebuilding process. For more information on transparency and opportunities for community involvement, follow us on Twitter @GoodJobsNewYork #EyeOnSandyMoney. Also, let us know how we can adjust this alert to make it better.

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Action Items

Today is the last day to submit comments on New York City's proposed Action Plan

Today is the last day to submit comments on the New York City Action Plan, available on the [NYC Recovery website](#). Comments can be submitted through the website, or written comments should be mailed to:

Mayor's Office of Operations
253 Broadway 10th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Comments may also be made by telephone by contacting 311 or (212) NEW-YORK (212-639-9675) from outside New York City.

Many community groups are expected to respond to the city's proposed Action Plan to use Community Development Block Grants. Send us your comments and we'll post them on our [Eye on Hurricane Sandy Money](#) webpage.

This Week's News

Disaster Relief

- FEMA's expenditures in New York State are expected to reach \$2.5 billion within a few weeks, a threshold that allows the state to formally request the federal government to increase its share of the cost of relief spending to 90 percent. [Newsday](#)
- The U.S. Inspector General has issued a report identifying that \$700 million awarded to homeowners devastated by Hurricane Katrina is unaccounted for, and repairs and fortifications have not been made. Some members of Congress urge greater oversight with Sandy spending. [ABC News](#)

ALSO: *Two opinion columns call for increased oversight on Sandy spending.* [The Record](#) and [Newsday](#)

- Businesses that were forced to close due to pervasive power outages after Sandy are finding their business interruption insurance claims are being denied because their property was not closed due to flooding. [The New York Post](#)

- Cash flow in New York City after Sandy was relatively smooth, in part due to extraordinary efforts behind the scenes to keep banks and ATMs stocked with cash. [Crain's New York Business](#)
- \$1.4 billion in Federal Transportation Administration emergency funds were disbursed to rail and tunnel operators in the metro New York region last Friday. [Newsday](#) and [The Times-Record](#)
- Westchester County will receive \$2.7 million in federal money to help reimburse some of the costs of repairing damage from Sandy, including the historic boardwalk at Playland in Rye. [LoHud.com](#)
- Governor Christie submitted to HUD New Jersey's final plan for the use of \$1.8 million in federal CDBG funds. The final plan is mostly unchanged from the draft released in March. Programs will offer grants to homeowners, low-interest loans to businesses, and cash incentives to landlords to rebuild. [NBC New York Channel 4](#)

ALSO: While New Jersey officials have asked HUD to fast-track its Action Plan, some policy experts express concern that the plan lacks key details and fails to address needs of the most affected residents. [The Press of Atlantic City](#)

- Tens of thousands of Sandy-related insurance claims in the region are in litigation. [Crain's New York Business](#)
- A new drop-in volunteer relief center, funded by a grant from the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund headed by New Jersey's first lady Mary Pat Christie, will help advise Bergen County residents on post-storm issues including mold remediation and legal issues. [AP via NorthJersey.com](#)

ALSO: A profile of Mary Pat Christie who has used her connections in bond-trading circles to establish a relief fund for Sandy victims. [Bloomberg Businessweek](#)

- Insurance giant Swiss Re issued a report highlighting the potential future impacts of storm surge. [The Royal Gazette](#)

Rebuilding Infrastructure

- The Sandy Regional Assembly released its [Recovery Agenda](#), noting priority projects for federal spending in Sandy-impacted communities in the region. [The New York World](#) and [NY1](#)

ALSO: Infrastructure priorities included in the Assembly recommendations include repairing the Long Beach Boardwalk, providing emergency generators to all NYCHA facilities, and protecting the region's food distribution system. [City Limits](#)

- Some Staten Island subcontractors that worked for the city's Rapid Repairs program have not been paid. The City claims responsibility lies with the general contractors. [Staten Island Advance](#)
- Some coastal residents are protesting the new FEMA flood maps, which would require elevating homes in some areas on stilts to withstand wave velocity. FEMA has conceded that the methods used in preparing the draft maps may have overstated the risk. [WNYC](#)

- An editorial urges officials to focus on long-term recovery and resiliency in Sandy rebuilding efforts. [Emergency MGMT.com](#)
- Environmental groups in New Jersey are advocating that the Army Corps of Engineers use federal appropriations to restore coastal lakes and ecosystems connected to beaches devastated by Sandy. [Atlanticville](#)
- Local officials in New Jersey are reminding residents to sign up for reverse 911, an emergency notification system. [Ramsey Patch](#)
- Thousands of New York City residents experienced drastic reduction in cell service during Sandy, and not all cell towers have back-up generators or other crisis procedures in place. [WNYC](#)

Housing

- The Disaster Housing Assistance Program, administered through HUD and FEMA, will be used in New York City to help families find long-term housing. [Crain's New York](#)
- Over 2,000 individuals displaced by Hurricane Sandy continue to live in hotels, using FEMA vouchers. Associated Press via [NBC Channel 4 New York](#)
- An interactive map details the percent of tax base lost due to property damage by Sandy to homes and businesses in coastal New Jersey towns. [The Star-Ledger](#)
- Many residents in Howard Beach, Queens, have been dropped by insurance providers, a trend occurring since Hurricane Irene. [Queens Chronicle](#)
- A Red Hook resident compiled a map of the flooding from the storm surge in his neighborhood and urges the city to post elevation markers in low-lying areas. [DNAinfo.com](#)

Jobs

- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that New York residents lost \$4.5 billion in wages as a result of Sandy. [Newsday](#)
- A California-based contractor for the Army Corps of Engineers received \$10 million to clear debris on Fire Island after Sandy, but workers claim subcontractors underpaid them. [Newsday](#)

Also: Fire Island debris clean-up subcontractor explains pay rate questions. [Newsday](#)

- The rebuilt Bay Parkway Community Job Center in Brooklyn, a meeting place for day laborers, has provided valuable services to workers who in many cases were first-responders after the storm and volunteered emergency debris removal and supply distribution services. [Fox News Latino](#)

Events & Advocacy News

List your upcoming event here! Email elizabeth@goodjobsfirst.org

Sandy Regional Assembly Recovery Agenda - [Recovery from the ground up: Strategies for community-based resiliency in New York and New Jersey](#). Released this week, the Recovery Agenda will be presented soon to the federal Sandy Rebuilding Task Force chaired by HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, Governors Cuomo & Christie, and Mayor Bloomberg.

Thursday, April 11: [Don't Miss this Step: Lessons to Be Learned From Superstorm Sandy](#). Presented by the Steven L. Newman Real Estate Institute, Baruch College and ASHRAE at The William and Anita Newman Vertical Campus Conference Center, 151 East 25th Street, Room 750 New York, NY 10010.

New York Governor Cuomo [announced](#) an extension of the Temporary Sheltering Assistance program. The new check-out date for program participants is April 14.

Regional Plan Association's Annual Assembly "A Resilient Region" is April 19th. There is a fee to [register](#).

Updated statistics from FEMA on ongoing recovery efforts and costs for New York State: [Disaster assistance to New York survivors of Hurricane Sandy](#).

FEMA is [accepting applications](#) for its Youth Preparedness Council until April 19th.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York is conducting a [Small Business Credit Survey](#).

Food Bank For New York City details its disaster relief efforts in [Hurricane Sandy Response: 100 Days of Meeting the Needs](#)

National Grid customers can visit www.nationalgridus.com to get information about the National Grid Emergency Economic and Community Development program for business customers impacted by Hurricane Sandy.

The Federal Reserve Bank of New York is posting upcoming application deadlines, recovery resources, events, and key agency contacts on their [Sandy Information Center](#) page.

New York State health and safety inspectors from the Department of Labor will provide inspections and assessments to businesses effected by Sandy to help firms reopen as soon as possible. Call 1-888-4-NYSDOL (1-888-469-7365) or visit their [website](#) for more information.

Several non-profit organizations have endorsed [Post-Sandy Rebuilding Principles: Building a sustainable region and economy, creating jobs for all](#). We encourage you to sign on, too. Contact bettina@goodjobsfirst.org for more information.

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 Information

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