



FEMA

DR-4086-NJ- OV-001
FEMA News Desk: 1-877-434-4084

Overview

SHELTERING AND TEMPORARY ESSENTIAL POWER (STEP) PROGRAM

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in conjunction with state and local partners, is implementing a Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Program to help people get back into their homes quickly and safely.

STEP provides federal reimbursements to State and local governments performing work and services essential to protecting public health and safety, and protecting property. The program funds certain necessary and essential measures to provide limited power, heat and hot water to households. STEP may help residents safely shelter-in-place in their homes.

STEP residents that participate will be able to have the damage to their residence assessed and, where safe and practicable, have limited electricity restored and other basic repairs made so they can move back into their homes.

The local municipalities will reach out to residents directly to offer one or more of the following options:

- **STEP** can help residents shelter-in-place while repairs are made to their homes.
- **STEP** may repair the electric meter.
- **STEP** may provide limited power, heat and/or hot water for basic life sustaining needs.
- **STEP** may assist with temporary exterior repairs such as broken windows, covering damaged exterior walls and roofs, and patching and securing damaged exterior doors.
- **STEP** may include temporary repairs to ramps and other related construction elements needed to make the home accessible for residents with disabilities and others with physical accommodation requirements.

(MORE)

How do Homeowners apply for STEP?

Contact their local governments. The homeowner must submit a Right-of-Entry to their local government to initiate eligibility assessments.

If a household participates in the STEP program, they are no longer eligible for (403) Transitional Sheltering Assistance under Individual Assistance. However, other Individual Assistance programs such as (408) Rental Assistance and Home Repairs may still be available to affected homeowners.

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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). For TTY call 800-676-3777.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders 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.

Sheltering & Temporary Essential Power (STEP) Pilot Program

Frequently Asked Questions

QUESTIONS FROM HOMEOWNERS

Q: What is STEP?

A: The Sheltering and Temporary Essential Power (STEP) program provides limited power, heat and hot water by funding certain measures for residences.

- **STEP** can help residences shelter-in-place while they make repairs to their homes.
- **STEP** may repair the electric meter.
- **STEP** may provide limited power, heat and/or hot water for basic life sustaining needs.
- **STEP** may assist with temporary exterior repairs such as broken windows, covering damaged exterior walls and roofs, and patching and securing damaged exterior doors.
- **STEP** may include temporary repairs to ramps and other related construction elements needed to make the home accessible for residents with disabilities and others with physical accommodation requirements.

Q: How do I get information about this program?

A: Contact your local government to apply.

Q: How do I get STEP?

A: Your local government will decide what elements of the STEP Program are available for your community. You can contact them for more information.

Q: As a resident or homeowner, how do I apply for STEP?

A: You will need to:

1. Contact your local government.
2. Submit Right of Entry (ROE) completed and signed by the homeowner.
3. You must make yourself available or have a representative over the age of 18 present at the time of the assessment by local officials.
4. Provide proof of ownership (e.g. deed, tax bill, mortgage note).

Q: If my local government has approved the STEP program can I choose not to participate?

A: Yes. We encourage you to participate in the program since there is no cost to you; however you are not obligated to participate in the STEP program.

Q: Is debris removal from my property covered under the STEP program?

A: No. Debris removal is not included under STEP assistance. If you still have debris on your property a voluntary agency may be able to assist.

Q: How long will it take for the repairs to be done on my property?

A: All repairs done through STEP must be completed within 60 days of a signed ROE.

Q: Will the STEP repairs to my home have warranty coverage?

A: No. Repairs done through STEP will not have warranty coverage.

Q: I had my electric/gas meter replaced due to the damage it suffered from Hurricane Sandy. May I be reimbursed?

A: No. STEP is not a reimbursement program for individuals.

Q: Will I be able to apply for any other FEMA Individual assistance programs if I choose to participate in STEP?

A: Yes. Anyone who was impacted by Hurricane Sandy is urged to register for assistance through FEMA by calling 1-800-621-FEMA or going to www.disasterassistance.gov.

Q: If I have already reached the FEMA maximum grant award of \$31,900, am I still able to participate in STEP?

A: Yes. Residences who have received the maximum grant award from FEMA are eligible to register for STEP.

Q: If FEMA denied me for assistance, can I still register for STEP?

A: Yes. You can still apply for STEP.

Q: Does homeowners insurance disqualify you for STEP?

A: No. You can still apply for STEP.

Q: If your residence is a boat are you eligible for STEP?

A: This would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Q: Are residents receiving a check, contracted services or a combination of the two? What decides that?

A: Residents will not receive a check for the services. The local government will be reimbursed for services provided.

Q: Is \$10,000 the maximum amount available for a residential unit? What is the process for determining a resident's eligibility? Does the county decide what repairs are made or does the survivor have a say?

A: The \$10,000 is not a guaranteed sum but a "not to exceed" amount for qualifying repairs. The local government will decide what elements of the STEP program will be provided.

Q: What identification will contractors have?

A: This is a program that is managed by the local government and they will provide identification that they deem appropriate.

QUESTIONS FROM CONTRACTORS

Q: If there is a lack of supply of inventory such as 20 gallon hot water heaters is it reasonable to install a higher gallon?

A: The local government will be reimbursed for up to a 20 gallon unit.

Q: Can extra circuits be added for appliance such as stove and fridges?

A: No. Repair teams will install up to four 120 volt devices (plugs) in locations they determine are necessary.

Q: Construction workers during the assessment phase encounter mold or soaked rooms. Does that disqualify a household for STEP?

A: Mold does not disqualify a residence from receiving STEP repairs. Standing water may have an impact because of safety concerns; however assistance may be provided at the discretion of the home inspector.

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