



FEMA

January 19, 2021

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden:

Thank you for your time last Friday to discuss the recovery efforts in support of the survivors severely impacted by the Oregon wildfires. **This is in response to your request for clarification on whether FEMA assistance is available for the repair or replacement of septic tanks. The answer is in the affirmative.** Residents in the declared Counties of Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn and Marion may be eligible for a FEMA award for household repairs not usually covered by insurance. This includes repair or replacement of septic systems and wells damaged by wildfires.

FEMA may provide financial assistance for the repair of real property components, including wells and septic systems, which includes reimbursement for the cost of a licensed technician's professional assessment associated with the repair or replacement of those components. Additionally, when verifiable receipts or estimates are submitted on appeal, FEMA may pay up to the actual cost of the receipt or estimate for wells and septic systems, within the Housing Assistance cap of \$35,500.

Please note that this assistance comes out of the same cap as Home Repair and Replacement, so if an applicant has already received a max grant (\$35,500) for the damage to their structure, they would not be eligible for additional assistance to cover the well/septic damage.

Also, as wells and septic systems are generally considered uninsurable items, insured homeowners would have to provide a copy of their insurance settlement for FEMA review to ensure there is not a duplication of benefits.

Survivors who have questions or need assistance may call the FEMA Helpline at 1-800-621-3362. A Helpline Agent can discuss the specifics of their case and provide guidance needed to address their questions.

I want to assure you that my team remains committed to aiding survivors of the Oregon wildfires and will do everything within our ability to meet their individual needs.

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I hope this information is helpful. If you need additional information, please have your staff contact our Congressional Affairs Liaison, Sue Carlson, at 202-826-3184 or Sue.Carlson@fema.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,
**DOLPH A
DIEMONT**

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DOLPH A DIEMONT
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Dolph A. Diemont
Federal Coordinating Officer
Disaster Recovery Manager
FEMA-4562-DR-OR