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Christie Administration Announces Successful Completion Of Post-Sandy Waterway Debris Removal

Friday, October 18, 2013

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

More Than 101,000 Cubic Yards Of Debris And 360,000 Yards Of Sediment Removed From State Waters

Trenton, NJ – The unprecedented clean-up of New Jersey waterways following Superstorm Sandy, which resulted in the systematic removal of more than 101,000 cubic yards of debris from storm-impacted tidal waters, is officially coming to a close, the Christie Administration announced today.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has notified impacted municipalities that all waterway debris removal performed by three state-hired contractors for this effort will cease on October 30.

“The success of this massive project is the result of a true team effort involving not just the DEP, but the hard work of our contractors, our sister state agencies, the federal government and local and county governments,” said DEP Commissioner Bob Martin. “With this enormous effort, we were able to clear debris from bays, inlets, wetlands and the ocean.”

While debris removal is ending, sediment removal from state waters will continue through the fall. To date, more than 360,000 cubic yards of identified Sandy-related sediment has been removed from marinas, lagoons and back-bays.

In addition, the state Department of Transportation is developing a separate plan to dredge state channels, some of which suffered impact from Superstorm Sandy.

Earlier this year, during the first 100 days following the storm, the DEP and impacted municipalities cleared more than 8 million cubic yards of debris from the streets of storm-ravaged communities. The materials, including more than 4.5 million cubic yards of construction and demolition debris from some of the hardest hit towns in Monmouth, Ocean, Middlesex, Cape May and Atlantic counties, were sorted and safely disposed or recycled.

Then the DEP turned its focus to the challenge of removing docks, bulkheads, pieces of boardwalks, boats, cars and even houses, and other storm debris from tidal waters from Bergen County to Cape May and up the Delaware Bay to the Delaware Memorial Bridge in Salem County.

The DEP hired three contractors through public bidding to focus the federally-funded water cleanup effort in separate coastal regions. The DEP separately engaged three debris monitors to provide FEMA-required oversight of the debris removal work, and a project manager, Dewberry Engineers, Inc., to manage this complex undertaking.

The firms surveyed nearly 195,000 acres by side-scan sonar and gathered and removed the following materials from New Jersey waters:

- 360,000 cubic yards of sediment (to date)
- 101,716 cubic yards of debris
- 6,019 submerged targets – which could be any type of storm-related debris
- 194 vessels and vehicles
- 4 mostly intact homes

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The bulk of the debris removal work was completed by mid-summer. However, remaining wet debris and submerged material took longer to locate and remove.

“The waterway debris removal project represents the finest efforts of New Jersey, showcasing our ability to pull together the best resources available to get the job done safely, on time and with utmost respect and consideration for the environment and, of course, for our residents and businesses,” said DEP Assistant Commissioner for Environmental Management Jane Kozinski, who coordinated the water and land debris removal projects.

Agencies that worked with DEP on this concentrated effort include the state Department of Transportation's Office of Maritime Resources, the State Police Marine Services Bureau, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Earlier this month, municipalities were given until October 15 to notify the DEP of any remaining waterway debris removal requests. With the passing of this deadline, municipalities are again solely responsible for the safety of their beaches and public areas and hazards in the water.

For more information on the DEP's Sandy recovery efforts and waterway debris removal visit:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dep/special/hurricane-sandy> or <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/special/hurricane-sandy/wwdebris.htm>

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