



FEMA

# Disaster News

July 9, 2007  
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News Desk: 504-762-2477

## **PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AND PROJECT WORKSHEETS: THE PATH TO REBUILDING**

**NEW ORLEANS** – The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) public assistance program plays an integral role in a community’s disaster recovery process. In Louisiana, the program is one of many key forces behind the recovery of state and local governments and certain private nonprofits.

The public assistance program awards grants to remove debris, demolish structures, carry out emergency protective measures, and repair and replace damaged, eligible infrastructure. The most important step in the program is project formulation, which includes preparing project worksheets (PW). The PW describes the eligible work and scope of work and estimates the costs to repair the damage. In Louisiana, 35,941 PWs have been written for both hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The PW undergoes a thorough review process before being approved and obligated. Once obligated, the grant money is transferred to the state to administer and distribute after an applicant requests funding. Although the public assistance program is a reimbursement program, the state may advance a portion of the funding to help applicants move projects forward.

FEMA has obligated 34,660 PWs to the state of Louisiana, amounting to more than \$4.8 billion of the \$8 billion gulf wide recently announced by FEMA's Gulf Coast Recovery Office. Louisiana has disbursed \$2.5 billion of these funds to applicants. The remaining monies are immediately available to the parishes as soon as they request the funding and satisfy state requirements.

An obligated PW does not firmly establish the final amount an applicant will receive, but rather provides an early estimate of costs. Throughout the rebuilding process, additional costs may be added to an infrastructure project as the architecture and engineering plans take form or hidden damages are identified during routine reassessments. Thus, the PW is an evolving document that acts as a historical record detailing the life of the grant.

“Recovery after any disaster is difficult, particularly after one of this magnitude,” said Jim Stark, FEMA director of the Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office. “FEMA’s public assistance program provides supplemental funding to restore and rebuild communities to their pre-disaster function and capacity. We will continue to work closely with the state and applicants to move the recovery process forward, and we will not stop until all eligible damage is identified and the last dollar is obligated to rebuild Louisiana.”

FEMA is doing everything possible to ensure that each applicant receives the maximum amount of assistance they are entitled to under the law. In addition to retraining staff and establishing mentor programs for newer public assistance staff, FEMA has also retained experts in various fields to refine the needs and cost estimates of projects requested by the state and applicants. To combat applicant staffing shortages, FEMA has co-located its staff with state and local counterparts whenever possible. In addition, FEMA has a number of liaisons and experts working throughout the impacted areas to assist applicants in developing their PW packages.



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After working with the parishes to identify high priority projects that are crucial to recovery, FEMA has given those projects precedence for review and approval. These initiatives, along with Congress' recent waiver of the 10 percent match, have been successful as evidenced by the high percentage of PWs completed to date. For the PWs that have not yet been written, FEMA is ready to engage as soon as the applicants are ready and eligible damage is identified.

While difficulties have arisen, the success of the public assistance program should not be judged by the number of problems encountered, but by the number of problems solved. FEMA remains committed to Louisiana until all PWs are written and the last penny is obligated to rebuild the state.

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Editors: For more information on Louisiana disaster recovery, visit [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).



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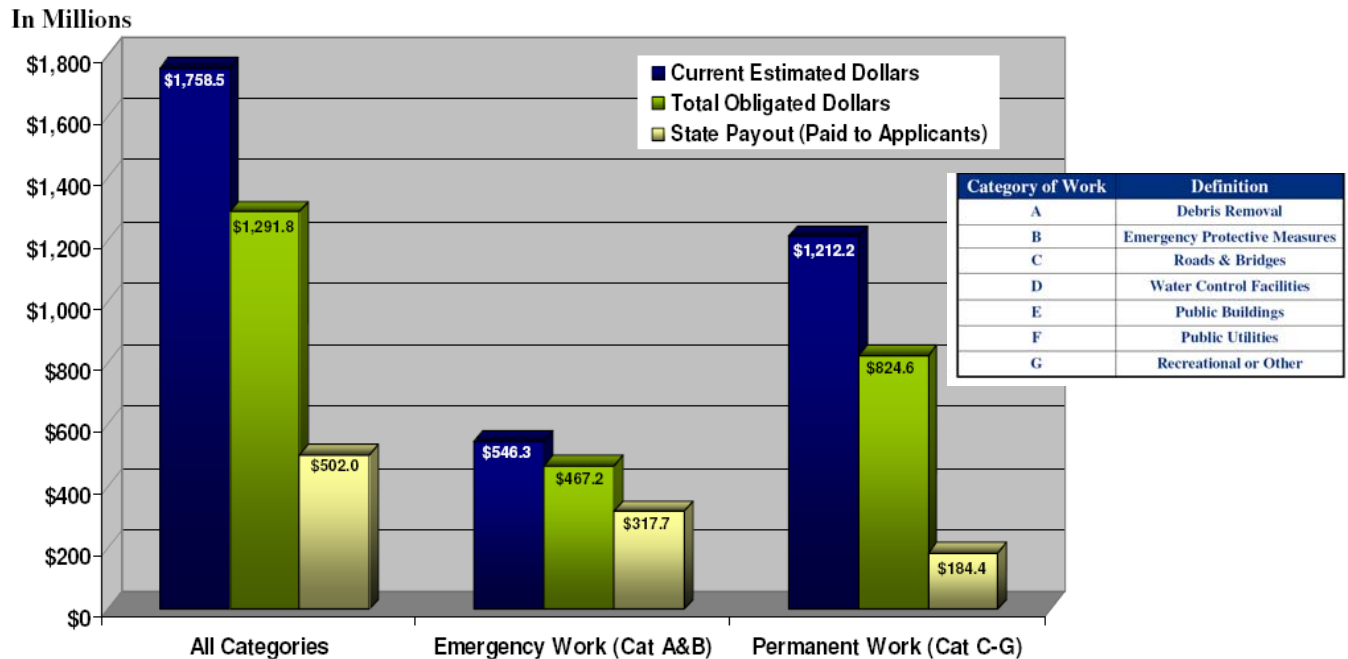
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# Fact Sheet

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, ORLEANS PARISH

### Public Assistance Funding for Orleans Parish and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$1.29 billion



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following Orleans Parish projects:

- **Recovery School District** - \$56 million will provide classroom space for 7,200 students at the beginning of the 2007-08 school year.
- **City Park** - \$11,578,898 in funding will aid the recovery of one of the country's oldest parks.
- **New Orleans Museum of Art** - \$1,779,805 was obligated to restore this significant contributor to the city's tourism industry and economic recovery.

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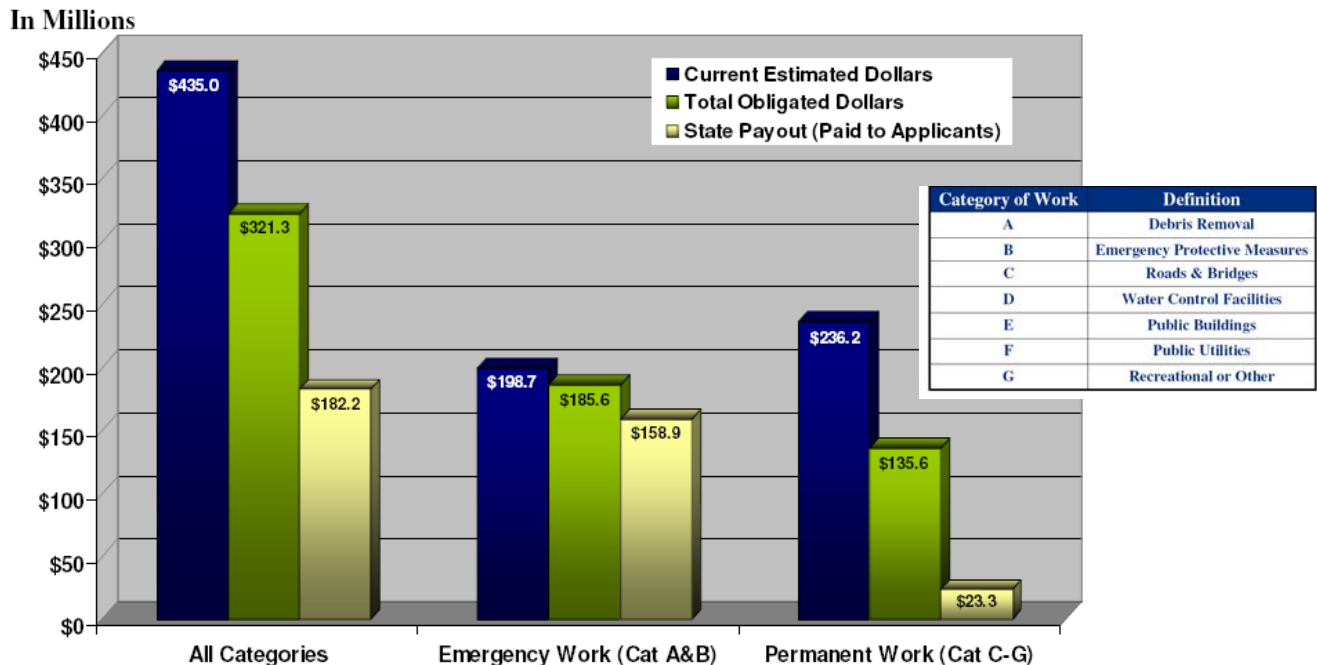
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# Fact Sheet

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

### Public Assistance Funding for City of New Orleans and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$321.3 million



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following city of New Orleans projects:

- **New Orleans Police Department Crime Lab** – Federal funding was used to build a temporary facility at the University of New Orleans to process evidence within the state.
- **St. Mary’s Academy** - \$8.2 million was obligated to purchase and setup temporary facilities for 750 students for the 2007-08 school year.
- **Mahalia Jackson Theater of Performing Arts** - \$7 million will go towards the home of the New Orleans Opera Association and the site of many of the city’s Mardi Gras festivities.

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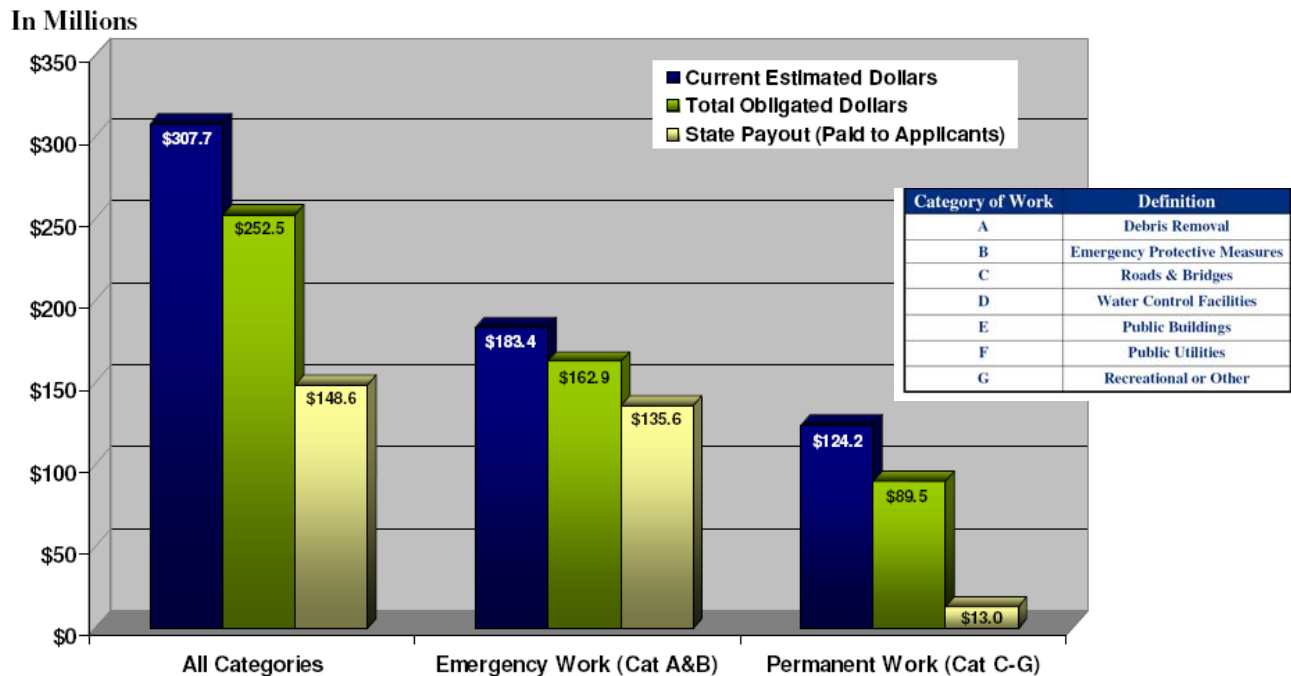
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# Fact Sheet

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, JEFFERSON PARISH

### Public Assistance Funding for Jefferson Parish and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$252.5 million



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following Jefferson Parish projects:

- **Emergency Work** – Almost all of the estimated funding for emergency work in Jefferson Parish has been obligated. This includes debris removal and emergency protective measures.
- **Sidewalks** - \$922,000 was obligated to repair sidewalks damaged by toppled trees and debris removal equipment.
- **Terrytown Gymnasium** - \$3,093,162 will fund the replacement of this key facility that supports many community activities for youth and seniors.

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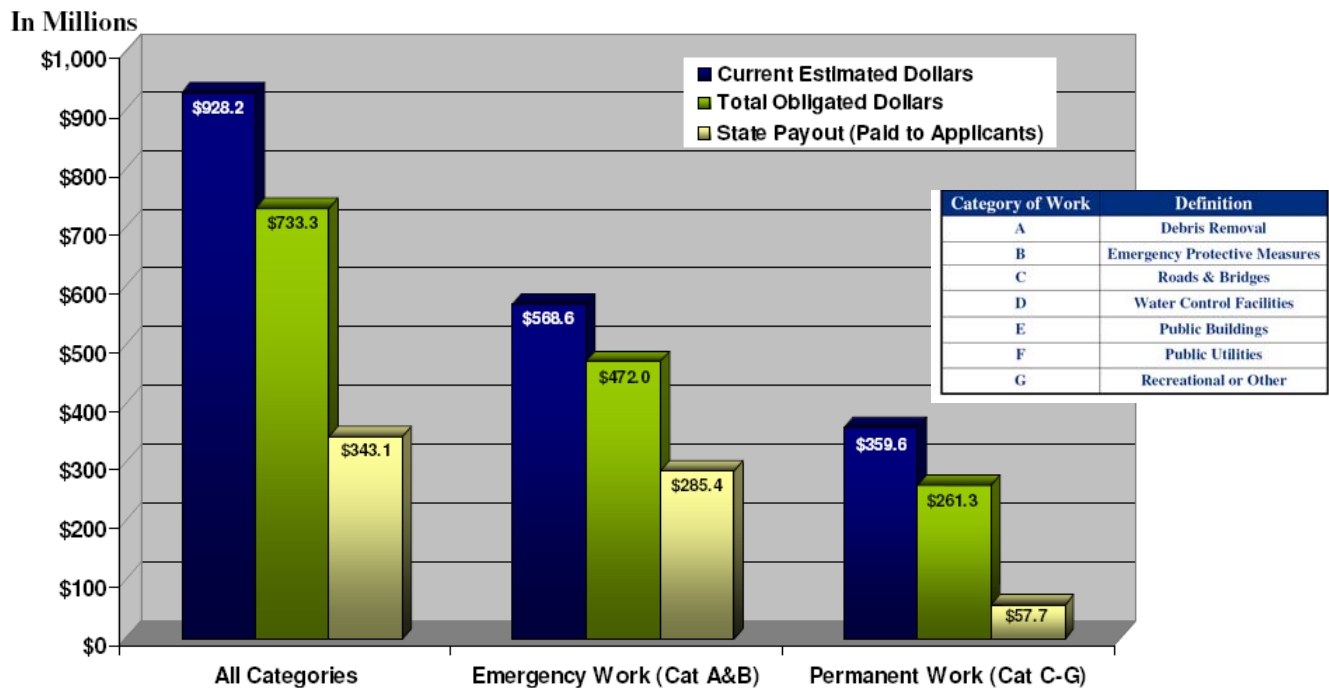
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## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, ST. BERNARD PARISH

### Public Assistance Funding for St. Bernard Parish and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$733.3 million



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following St. Bernard Parish projects:

- **St. Bernard 911 Center** - \$1,141,000 will be used for a new state-of-the-art Emergency Operations and 911 Center to help residents in time of an emergency.
- **St. Bernard Parish Government Complex** - \$1,378,093 was obligated to restore the parish's seat of government.
- **Val Reiss Park** - \$3,848,489 in obligated funding for all of the parish's parks will be consolidated and used to reopen Val Reiss Park.

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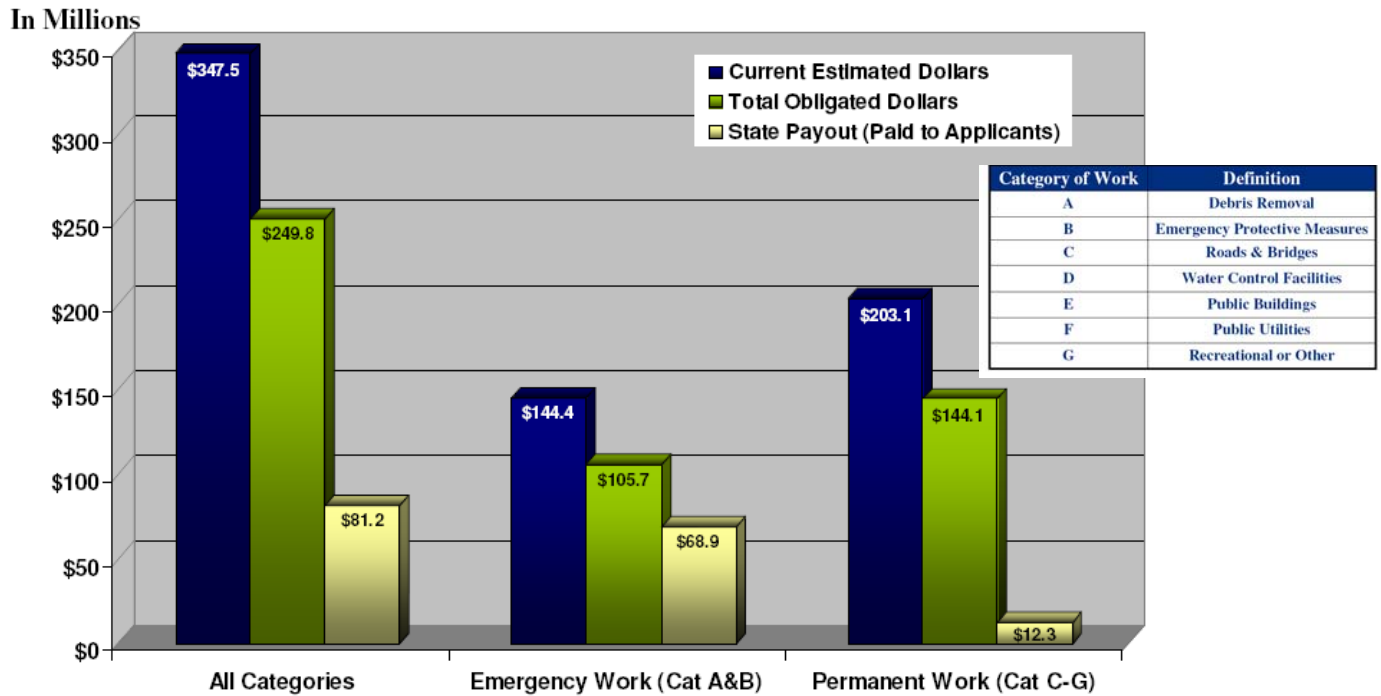
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## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, PLAQUEMINES PARISH

### Public Assistance Funding for Plaquemines Parish and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$249.8 million



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following Plaquemines Parish projects:

- **Plaquemines Medical Center** - \$755,000 will help Plaquemines Parish establish a temporary medical facility to serve the entire community.
- **Belle Chasse Library** - \$467,703 in funding will help restore the parish's main public library.
- **Belle Chasse Auditorium** - \$79,849 was obligated to the parish's largest and primary auditorium.

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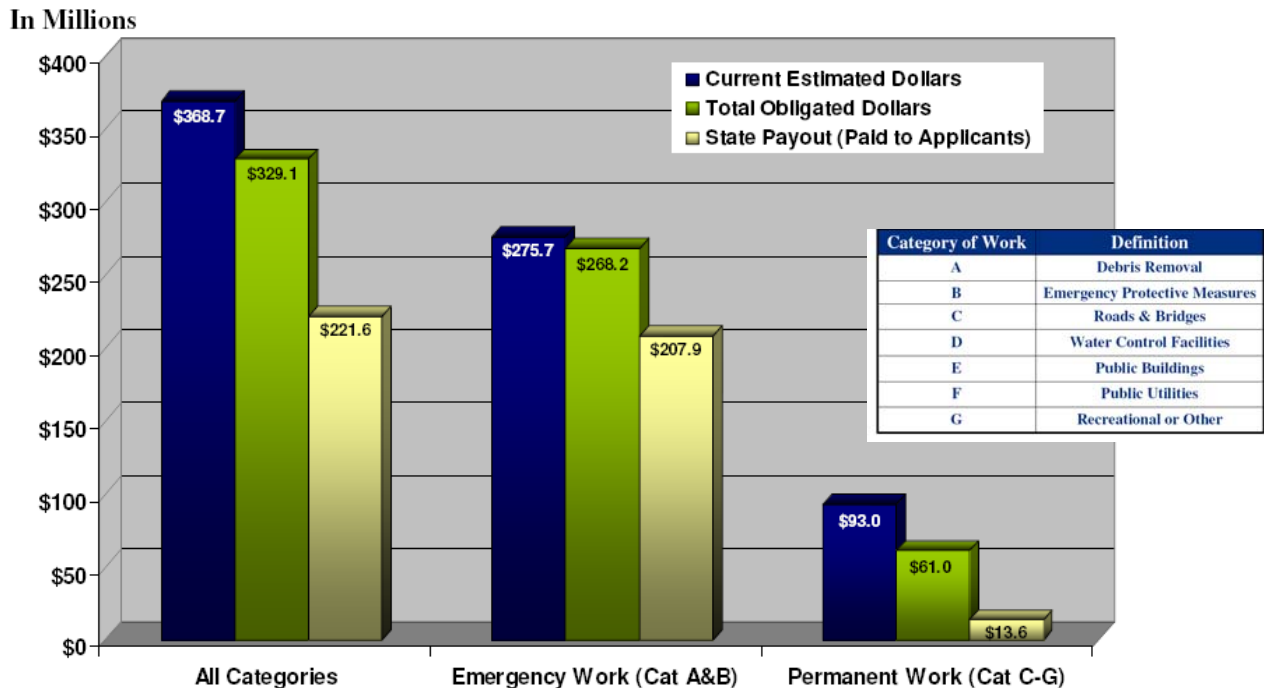
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## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, ST. TAMMANY PARISH

### Public Assistance Funding for St. Tammany Parish and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$329.1 million



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following St. Tammany Parish projects:

- **St. Tammany Parish Government** – Public assistance monies will fund the repairs of this six-story structure that was inundated with water during Hurricane Katrina.
- **Debris** - \$218,678,000 has been obligated for debris removal throughout St. Tammany Parish.
- **East St. Tammany Events Center** - The center's recovery efforts are well underway with federal monies reimbursing repairs to the Katrina-damaged building, parking lot and driveways.

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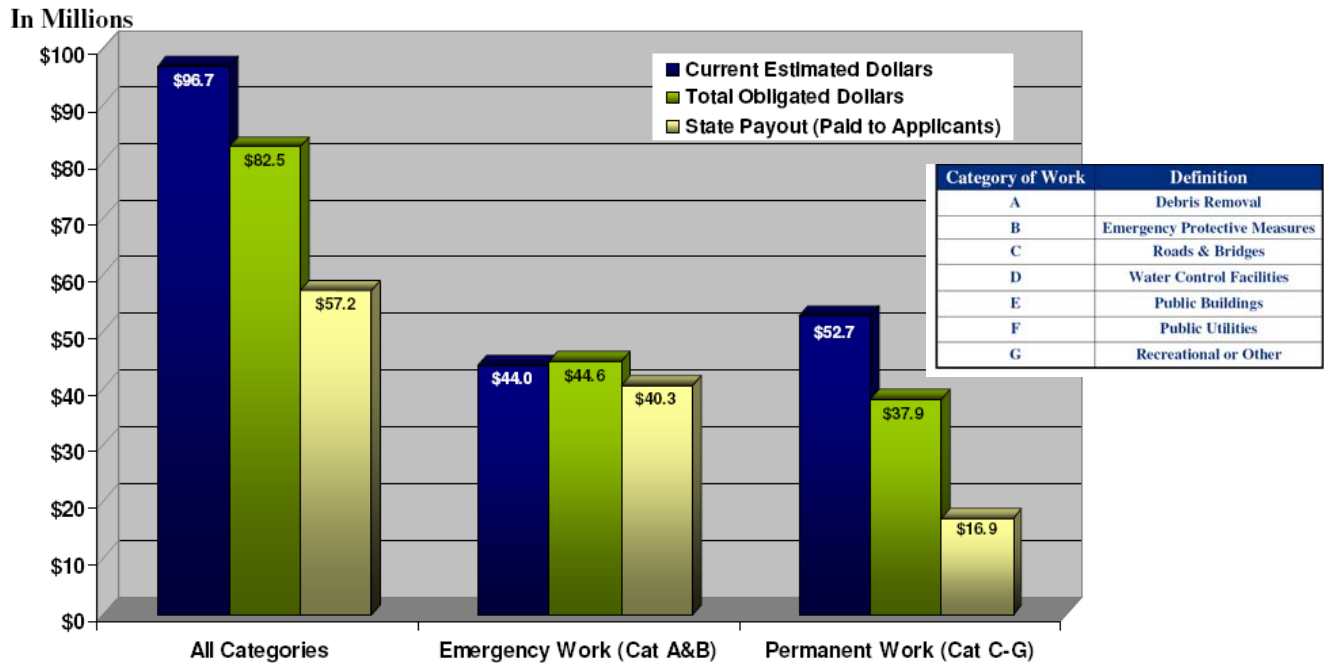
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## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS, CALCASIEU PARISH

### Public Assistance Funding for Calcasieu Parish and State Payout, July 6, 2007

Total federal funds obligated: \$82.5 million



Some of this public assistance funding went into the following Calcasieu Parish projects:

- **Debris and Demolition** - The removal of debris and the demolition of unsafe structures due to Hurricane Rita are complete in the city of Lake Charles, with 54 structures demolished and dangerous debris removed from 416 private properties.
- **Public Works** – Public assistance funding was used to restore the city’s wastewater treatment capacity and to replace the public works administration building.
- **Lake Charles Civic Center** - \$43,508 was obligated to repair this important municipal resource that plays host to numerous community, industry and sporting events throughout the year.

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