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cc  
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Subject AMO POLICY UPDATE - Government Announces New  
Disaster Recovery Assistance Programs

August 20, 2015

## Government Announces New Disaster Recovery Assistance Programs

Earlier this week at the AMO Conference in Niagara Falls, the Honourable Ted McMeekin, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, unveiled changes to the way the Province will help assist municipal governments and individuals recover from the impacts associated with natural disasters. The Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program (ODRAP) will be retired and replaced by two new programs: a Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance program and a Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians program. The design and delivery of the new programs will have implications on how municipal governments plan for and recover from disaster events.

The Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance program will:

- Help municipal governments address eligible emergency response costs and repairs to damaged property and infrastructure such as roads, bridges and public buildings; and
- Provide an extended four month timeframe for a municipality to assess the damage and costs of the natural disaster and request provincial assistance. Under ODRAP, municipal governments had 14 days to assess damage and request assistance from the Province.

The Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians program will:

- Provide assistance to individuals, small businesses, farmers and not-for-profit organizations that have experienced damage to, or loss of, essential property as a result of the disaster;
- Be directly administered by the Province; and
- Municipal governments will no longer be required to appoint volunteer Disaster Relief Committees to fundraise for matching provincial assistance, but they may choose to continue to fundraise on their own.

Municipal governments have been requesting the government to make the private and public components of ODRAP more clear, transparent and streamlined. These new programs will help municipal governments focus efforts on disaster response and recovery in the wake of an event. Further information on the eligibility criteria and requirements for the new programs will be made available by early 2016. AMO looks forward to the release of these details and will provide a further update to the membership once this information is provided.

The eligibility requirements of ODRAP funded repairs to damaged municipal infrastructure to pre-disaster condition only. AMO would like to see funding assistance extended beyond this requirement so that municipal governments can better prepare critical infrastructure for the effects from climate change and natural disasters.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing launched their review of ODRAP last fall as part of the direction in the Minister's mandate letter. Municipal governments, through several forums including AMO's ODRAP Review Task Force, participated and provided input during these consultations.

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