

Debris Management in and along Rivers and Streams



For help with debris removal, call Vermont Emergency Management at 1-800-347-0488.

This summer's floods have deposited unwanted natural and human-made debris. [After a Flood - River and Stream Debris Management](#) is an easy-to-read, two-page guide to managing debris in and along rivers and streams. It was updated by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources on 9/1/2023.

A brief summary:

- **Report all debris information** to Vermont Emergency Management at 1-800-347-0488. The State may help with removal and disposal.
- **Human-made debris**, such as appliances, furniture, tires, or construction materials, may be removed without restrictions. It must be disposed of or recycled at a solid waste management facility.
- **Natural debris left in the river after a flood**, such as trees, large rocks, excess gravel, or excess sediment, cannot be removed without review by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. This includes areas around culverts and bridges. Use the [online form](#) to contact the Rivers Management Program or call 802-828-1115.
- **Natural debris left on land after a flood** may be removed by property owners without restrictions. This material is a low priority for removal by the State.

- **Avoid comingling natural and human-made debris.** They need to be separated and managed separately. Vegetative debris can be composted and placed outside the river or stream.

If not eligible for FEMA Public Assistance, the NRCS [Emergency Watershed Protection \(EWP\) Program](#) covers 75% of the cost to remove debris and/or stabilize streambanks that pose an imminent threat. These projects require government sponsorship. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources will sponsor or co-sponsor any EWP project. The Agency's co-sponsorship effectively means municipalities can continue to submit projects to the EWP program. Contact John Schmeltzer, DEC Deputy Director, at 802-249-5620 to discuss potential projects.

Keep current on debris management - visit our [Got Debris?](#) webpage!