

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mobile Home Demolition Begins

Berlin -- The post-Irene mobile home demolition and removal task force, organized by Lt. Governor Phil Scott and Secretary of Commerce and Community Development Lawrence Miller, started work early this morning at Weston's Mobile Home Park. By 1:30 today, the work crew was starting on demolishing their third home and delivering a "clean slate" to residents who are anxious to get on with their lives after the flood.

A total of 20 homes at Weston's were slated for demolition through the program, which has worked over the last two months to substantially reduce the cost of removal by lining up several homes in the same locations for on-site demolition. Individual mobile home disposal typically involves trucking the unit out of the park and can cost upwards of \$3,500. Thanks to successful fundraising by the Vermont Community Foundation and the Vermont Long Term Disaster Recovery Group, the service will be offered free of charge to mobile home park residents.

"I'm pleased to see us moving ahead," said Lt. Gov. Scott, who was on the work site today alongside members of the Associated General Contractors of Vermont, raking up debris and coordinating excavators and dumpsters. "We've run into a few delays in the project's planning stages over the last several weeks, but today, our crews are running right on schedule," he said.

Five of the 20 homes slated for demolition at Weston's contain asbestos in the flooring, so asbestos-certified contractors will be removing those materials later this week before demolition begins on that group of homes.

Asbestos remediation is expected to add an estimated \$1,500-\$2,500 to the cost of removal of each affected home. If the same ratio of asbestos-affected homes seen at Weston's (25%) holds up in other parks around the state, the task force anticipates a cost increase of as much as \$62,000 for asbestos remediation in affected homes throughout the state, and another \$40,000 for asbestos testing of all of the mobile homes scheduled for demolition through the project.

"It's been our goal from the beginning to offer this service free of charge to mobile home owners," said Chris Graff of the Vermont Long Term Disaster Recovery Group. Facing an additional total need of \$150,000, the group has a lot of fundraising to do.

“The great thing here is how quickly things are moving,” said Graff. “The bad news is that we need to raise a lot more money to meet the unmet needs from Irene,” of which asbestos-affected mobile homes are just one example.

Christopher Kauffman-Ilstrup of the Vermont Community Foundation, which has set up a separate fund specifically to help mobile home owners with their post-Irene needs, encouraged Vermonters to donate online at www.vtfloodresponse.org.

After demolition at Weston’s is complete – hopefully within two weeks -- the task force will head to Patterson Mobile Home Park in Duxbury, where 13 homes are slated for demolition, and to Woodstock, where 4 mobile homes await removal. All of those homeowners have completed the FEMA grant process.

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For more information, please contact:

Nancy Driscoll / Chief of Staff, Lt. Governor Phil Scott
nancy.driscoll@state.vt.us // Office: 802-828-2226 // Cell: 802-734-7555