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STATE AUDITOR



**STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR**

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**Auditor Salmon urges state/municipal leaders and Vermonters
to document flood activity**

MONTPELIER – State Auditor Tom Salmon, CPA, today urged state and local officials and flood victims to be mindful of the need for proper documentation for FEMA assistance and other reimbursements.

Salmon said, “We already know that insurance and FEMA will not cover 100 percent of the losses. Thorough documentation and photographs will help you optimize your financial recovery.”

Yesterday Salmon was contacted by fellow auditors from Mississippi and Alabama, states devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Both Auditor Ron Jones (AL) and Auditor Stacey Pickering (MS) were in Vermont earlier this month for the National Association of State Auditors, Comptroller and Treasurers Conference and both auditors took time to enjoy the scenery and covered bridges. Knowing Vermont’s beauty and having experienced disasters in his own state, Pickering advised Salmon to remind local and state leaders to document every activity and expenditure related to the storm and follow the required bidding processes. If you are unable to follow the required bidding process due to urgency, accurately document and justify the reasons. Municipalities should follow a purchasing policy, if the town does not have a formal policy they can refer to state Bulletin 3.5 for guidance.

Salmon attended a joint meeting of the Rockingham selectboard and Bellows Falls trustees last night and advised local leaders to follow Pickering’s advice as they seek to repair and replace important assets of the town including the Bartonsville covered bridge. Susan Hammond took the video of the bridge being swept away by the river. She is leading a citizens’ partnership with the town to replace the bridge. Additionally, the town of Rockingham has already started a fund knowing that insurance, FEMA, and the state may not provide sufficient replacement funds. Salmon was a selectboard member in Rockingham before becoming state auditor.

Salmon recommended that towns assign individuals or volunteers with financial skills to begin collecting any and all paperwork related to possible reimbursements including time reports, labor reports, material lists, equipment rentals and contractor utilization reports that FEMA may fund.

“Ask questions. Figure out expectations about procurement. If you need to get information from [FEMA](#), or the state organization of jurisdiction (Agency of Transportation, etc.), or anyone you expect reimbursement from, please do so in a timely manner,” Salmon said.

He also said that he is very grateful for the contributions of all military personnel and all Vermont contractors, first responders, utility work crews, public works employees as well as volunteers from in and out of state.