

## **Pilot Program Aimed to Help with Debris Removal Ends Today**

MONTGOMERY – Governor Robert Bentley today announced that Operation Clean Sweep (OCS), the pilot program designed to provide a more immediate, deliberate, and comprehensive approach to the debris removal process in federally declared disaster areas will not be extended as requested and will end today.

Today's deadline only applies to the cost share associated with debris removal. Work to remove all of the estimated 10 million cubic yards of public debris, which covered about 65% of the state, will continue until all debris is removed. The clean-up following the April 27th tornado outbreak has been overwhelmingly successful due to the leadership and support from the local and the states' federal partners. To date, over 80% of the debris in tornado affected areas has been cleared and Alabama is well ahead of debris cleanup than with any other natural disaster experienced in recent state history. Already, 8.2 million cubic yards of debris has been removed in 74 days, compared with Hurricane Ivan in which 8.5 million cubic yards were removed in approximately five months.

"I am disappointed that Operation Clean Sweep will not be extended. This unprecedented program allowed our local governments to begin the process of removing debris from the April tornado outbreak without the financial burden being placed on them," said Governor Robert Bentley. "I want to encourage local governments to continue moving forward as quickly as possible with removing debris from their areas as we all work together to help rebuild Alabama."

As part of the clean sweep, the President authorized a 90% federal cost share until today for the removal of debris in counties designated for Federal Assistance that are within areas of extensive or catastrophic damage. The debris removal operations will now be 75% federal and 25% non-federal and the state will cover half of the non-federal cost share.

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*For more information, contact the Governor's Press Office at 334-242-7150.*