



FEMA

Mitigation Protects Water Line Allegany County Benefits

Allegany County, New York – A mitigation project to protect a water supply pipe in Allegany County has likely paid for itself at least three times since it was completed. Severe storms and flooding in the spring of 2000 caused the rupture of a water main that crosses under Houghton Creek in the Town of Caneadea. The main carries water from the town’s filtration plant to its water tower, supplying Houghton College and town residents.

The President approved the use of federal disaster funds to help New York recover from the effects of the storms. Among the recovery programs activated by the declaration was the Public Assistance Program. This program reimburses eligible government jurisdictions and certain non profits providing a government-like service for disaster-related damage and costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures and the repair or restoration of damaged public infrastructure.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides 75 percent of the grant funding. The 25 percent non-federal share is made up from other sources. The New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) administers the program. In most cases, Public Assistance repair and restoration funding brings the damaged infrastructure back to pre-disaster conditions.

However, a major FEMA and SEMO policy goal is to mitigate, where it is cost effective, when restoring damaged infrastructure so the repaired facility is better able to withstand future disaster damages. A little extra money spent now may save untold funds later.

Section 406 of the Public Assistance Program empowers the FEMA Region II Regional Director to make additional obligations of funding in order to protect the facility from future damages. That was the case with the Town of Caneadea water project.

In addition to repairing the damaged pipe to its pre-disaster condition, the project involved construction of an emergency overflow bypass, upstream from the area where the pipe ruptured, to divert stream flows during high water incidents. As a result, officials said, since the pipe was repaired it has performed without incident on several occasions, including three additional declared disaster events. The special mitigation work amounted to about \$42,000 of the total \$124,000 cost, with the federal share at about \$93,000.

“Mitigation activities such as these are a smart way of doing business by expending monies now to lessen the threat on communities before an event occurs in the future,” said James W. Tuffey, Director of the State Emergency Management Office.

“This is an excellent example of an investment in infrastructure improvements that will pay dividends for years to come,” said FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer Marianne C. Jackson.



**Allegany County,
New York**



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public

Cost:

\$123,603.00 (Actual)

Primary Activity/Project:

Flood-proofing

Primary Funding:

Other FEMA funds/ US Department of Homeland Security