



FEMA



MITIGATION DIRECTORATE

State and Local Mitigation Planning

Building Stronger and Safer—Disaster Resilient

Hazard mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from hazards. Hazard mitigation planning is the process State, Tribal, and local governments use to identify risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters, and to develop long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events.

Under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288), as amended, State, Tribal, and local governments are required to develop a hazard mitigation plan as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects.



RAISES AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

The planning process promoted by FEMA is as important as the resulting plan because it creates a framework for governments to reduce the negative impacts from future disasters on lives, property, and the economy.

The mitigation plan defines a long-term strategy for reducing disaster losses by breaking the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Mitigation planning includes the following elements:

Public involvement – Planning creates a way to solicit and consider input from diverse interests. Involving stakeholders is essential to building communitywide support for the plan. In addition to emergency managers, the planning process involves other government agencies (e.g., planning, zoning, floodplain

management, public works, conservation, community and economic development), businesses, civic and neighborhood groups, environmental groups, and schools.

Risk assessment – Mitigation plans identify natural hazards and risks based on history, potential frequency and magnitude, and identifies potential losses of life and property. The assessment considers the built environment including the type and numbers of existing and future buildings, infrastructure, and critical facilities relative to identified hazard areas.

Mitigation strategy – Based on the risk assessment, communities develop mitigation goals and objectives, as part of a strategy for mitigating disaster losses. The strategy is a community's approach for implementing mitigation activities that are cost-effective, technically feasible, and environmentally sound as well as allowing strategic investment of limited resources.

BENEFITS OF MITIGATION PLANNING

Increases public awareness and understanding of vulnerabilities as well as support for specific actions to reduce losses from future natural disasters.

Builds partnerships with diverse stakeholders increasing opportunities to leverage data and resources in reducing workloads as well as achieving shared community objectives. For example, managing floodplain development may decrease flood losses but also protect water quality by restoring natural functions.

Expands understanding of potential risk reduction measures to include structural and regulatory tools, where available, such as ordinances and building codes. Through implementation of local floodplain ordinances, it is estimated that \$1.1 billion in flood damages are prevented annually.

Informs development, prioritization, and implementation of mitigation projects. Benefits accrue over the life of the project as losses are avoided from each subsequent hazard event.



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PLANNING GUIDANCE, TOOLS & TRAINING

Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance, or "Blue Books," are designed to increase understanding of the requirements for States, local and Tribal governments when developing new or updated mitigation plans, and help Federal and State reviewers fairly and consistently evaluate mitigation plans from different jurisdictions.

Training available through FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) or your State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) include:

- G318 Mitigation Planning Workshop for Local Governments
- E296 HAZUS Multi-Hazard/DMA 2000 Risk Assessment
- E344 Mitigation for Tribal Officials

Series of "How-To" guides are designed to provide information beyond FEMA's basic requirements. The guides focus on initiating and maintaining a planning process that will result in safer communities, and are applicable to jurisdictions of all sizes, resource and capability levels.

CURRENT LIST OF HOW-TO SERIES

- Getting Started: Building Support For Mitigation Planning (FEMA 386-1)
- Understanding Your Risks: Identifying Hazards And Estimating Losses (FEMA 386-2)
- Developing The Mitigation Plan: Identifying Mitigation Actions And Implementing Strategies (FEMA 386-3)
- Bringing the Plan to Life: Implementing the Hazard Mitigation Plan (FEMA 386-4)
- Using Benefit-Cost Review in Mitigation Planning (FEMA 386-5)
- Integrating Historic Property and Cultural Resource Considerations into Hazard Mitigation Planning (FEMA 386-6)
- Integrating Manmade Hazards Into Mitigation Planning (FEMA 386-7)
- Multi-Jurisdictional Mitigation Planning (FEMA 386-8)
- Using the Hazard Mitigation Plan to Prepare Successful Mitigation Projects (FEMA 386-9)
- Using HAZUS-MH for Risk Assessment (FEMA 433)

HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING RESULTS

History shows that the physical, financial, and emotional losses caused by disasters can be reduced significantly through hazard mitigation planning. A broad range of activities designed to reduce risk can result from the mitigation planning process, such as:

- Adopting and enforcing regulatory tools, including ordinances, regulations, and building codes to guide and inform land use, development, and construction decisions in areas affected by hazards. Where authorized, consider adopting more stringent criteria to provide greater protection for citizens, as conditions may change over time. For example, consider:
 - ◆ Exceeding the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) floodplain management regulations by elevating structures above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) in high-risk areas.
 - ◆ Creating a buffer area by protecting natural resources, such as floodplains, wetlands or sensitive habitats. Additional benefits to the community may include improved water quality and recreational opportunities.
- Developing mitigation projects to acquire and demolish flood damaged structures, such as homes or businesses, or to retrofit public buildings, schools, and critical facilities to withstand extreme wind events or ground shaking from earthquakes.

The examples above illustrate a range of possible long-term mitigation actions and are not intended as examples of eligible activities under the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs.

HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (HMA)

FEMA's HMA programs fund eligible mitigation activities that reduce future disaster losses and protect life and property. Funding is available for mitigation plan development and updates as well as mitigation projects. Please note that specific requirements relative to FEMA-approved mitigation plan(s) as a condition of receiving mitigation project grants vary by HMA program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit the Mitigation Planning website:
www.fema.gov/plan/mitplanning/index



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