



# In Action - The Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program



**FEMA**

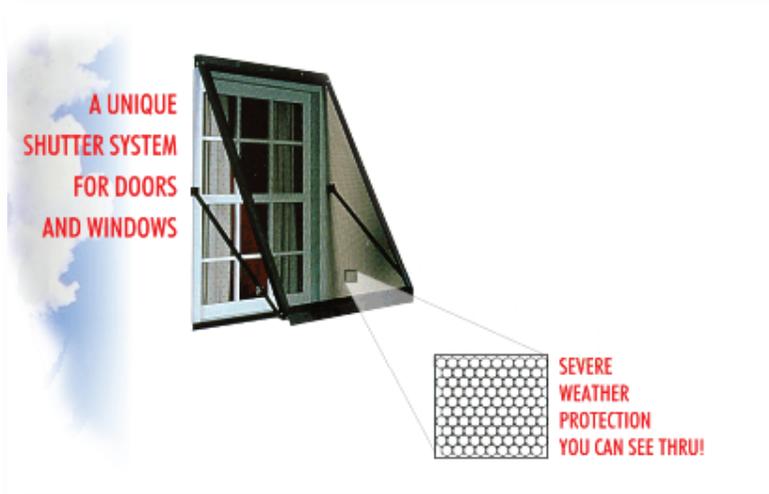
FEMA offers three mitigation grant programs to assist States, Tribal governments, and local communities to implement cost-effective, long-term hazard mitigation measures:

- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) provides funding after a disaster to implement mitigation measures to help reduce damages to public or private property from future disasters.
- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program provides funds for projects that reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, homes, and other structures that are insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program is a nationally competitive program that provides funding to implement cost-effective hazard mitigation activities prior to a disaster event.

To learn more about the PDM program or other mitigation grant programs, visit FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant> or contact the FEMA Regional Office nearest you.

To find additional examples of mitigation best practices throughout the country, please visit <http://www.fema.gov/fima/bp.shtm>

windstorms using a “see thru” shutter system for doors and windows that are engineered to comply with local building codes.



Other structures in Miami Dade County that have been similarly retrofitted have suffered only superficial damage, such as chipped paint, during high-wind events, including Hurricanes Katrina and Wilma.

## Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program

FEMA’s Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant program provides funds for hazard mitigation planning and projects to State, local and tribal governments. Mitigation reduces overall risks to people and the built environment, and reduces reliance on funding from disaster declarations. PDM grants are awarded on a competitive basis and without State allocations, quotas, or other formula-based allocation of funds.

“On average, a dollar spent by FEMA on hazard mitigation (actions to reduce disaster losses) grants provides the nation about \$4 in future benefits.”  
says Brent Woodworth, Chair Multihazard Mitigation Council and worldwide manager of IBM’s Crisis Response Team.

### What types of activities can be funded?

PDM can be used to fund hazard mitigation plans or projects to protect either public or private property. The project must comply with program guidelines and fit within the State and local government hazard mitigation strategy that addresses hazard risk. Examples of past projects include:

- Developing State, local, or tribal hazard mitigation plans;
- Constructing certain types of minor and localized flood control projects to protect critical facilities;
- Retrofitting structures to protect them from floods, high winds, earthquakes, or other natural hazards;
- Voluntarily acquiring real property for conversion to open space in perpetuity; and
- Constructing safe rooms inside schools or other buildings in tornado-prone areas.

Since its inception in 2002, the PDM program has funded over 750 hazard mitigation plans and projects to reduce the risk from natural hazards.

## Who is eligible to apply?

- State agency that has the State's primary emergency management responsibility
- U.S. Territory, District of Columbia, or
- Federally-recognized Indian tribal government.

The following entities are encouraged to apply as a Sub-applicant to an Applicant:

- State-level agencies;
- Federally-recognized Indian tribal governments;
- Local governments, including State-recognized Indian tribes;
- Authorized Indian tribal organizations;
- Alaska Native villages;
- Public colleges and universities; and,
- Indian tribal colleges and universities.

Private non-profit (PNP) organizations and private colleges and universities are not eligible Sub-applicants. However, an eligible State agency or local government may apply for assistance to benefit the PNP.

## How do different levels of government work together?

All levels of Government have a role in selecting, approving, administering and managing PDM grants. Communities or Tribes submit sub-applications to the Applicant (State, Territory or Tribe) and manage the project or plan. The Applicant ensures that all program and administrative requirements are met and monitors progress. FEMA establishes the funding and selection criteria, reviews and approves sub-applications, and provides technical assistance to ensure consistent and effective implementation of the program.

## Birmingham, Alabama Acquisition Project

The City of Birmingham has an aggressive goal to remove properties that are subject to repeated flooding. The City and the State of Alabama have successfully used the Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant program to further this goal. In 2003, Birmingham received a PDM grant to purchase 65 flood vulnerable properties.



The grant monies helped to relocate 55 families and turn this hazardous area into recreational parkland in perpetuity.

## Jackson Memorial Hospital, Miami, Florida, Wind Mitigation

A total of 32 hurricanes have struck Southern Florida in the past 100 years. Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami is one of the nation's busiest hospitals. It is also the major teaching facility for the University of Miami School of Medicine. Jackson Memorial plans to harden its buildings against

## Barry County, Michigan Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Barry County Hazard Mitigation Plan reflects the citizen's deep concern for the protection of quality of life, economy, property and the environment. The County developed an inventory of natural hazards that may affect its communities, citing winter weather as the top hazard.



The plan is the culmination of the collaborative efforts of local residents and officials to identify natural hazards, assess vulnerability and develop methods to eliminate or lessen the effects of hazards. It will serve as a guide for the protection of population and property in Barry County, home to nearly 60,000 residents.

*As administrators of the program, States and Tribes play a key role in implementing the PDM grant program.*

## Where can I get more information on PDM?

Information on the PDM program can be found at <http://www.fema.gov/fima/pdm.shtm>. This website provides PDM program guidance, policies and limited technical assistance.

## Here are a few of the many projects being undertaken with PDM funds across the country:

### Bay Area Rapid Transit District Mitigation Project

In the highly seismic area of San Francisco, California, the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system carries over 310,000 commuters by fixed rail and bus each workday. Studies found that BART's Train Operations Center is at significant risk of collapse in the event of an earthquake.

BART is using their PDM grant to raze the above ground portion of the building and move the entire operation underground. This will enable the City to reduce the potential for damages, increase the safety of BART employees, and help to maintain normal transportation routes for the Bay Area following an earthquake.

### Mid-Columbia & Southeast Oregon Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning Initiative

There is significant vulnerability to earthquakes in this region of Oregon. In addition, winter storms, windstorms and wildfires pose a risk to the population and to the economy of both the region and the State. The initiative supports plan development in local communities by improving communication, coordination and collaboration.

The planning process engages communities in identifying their hazards and risks, and developing hazard mitigation actions that address infrastructure and service needs, specific land uses, engineering standards and building codes. This will enable the community to take actions that will reduce vulnerability to natural hazards, and potential loss of life, injury and property damage.

### **University of California - San Francisco Medical Center Seismic Saw-Cut Project**

California Senate Bill 1953 requires all hospitals to achieve collapse-avoidance retrofits by 2008. The 526-bed Moffitt-Long Hospital, operated by the University of California San Francisco (UCSF) Medical Center conducted an engineering analysis on alternative seismic mitigation measures to achieve this mandate.

The analysis revealed that the Medical Center and the Medical Science Building would perform better as independent structures during an earthquake rather than physically connected as they are currently. Project Seismic Saw-Cut, funded through a PDM grant, will sever the connection between the two structures and install a seismic expansion joint in the gap. This mitigation activity will improve the chances of both structures surviving a major seismic event with minimal structural damage.

### **Pima County, Arizona Canada del Oro Acquisition Project**

The presence of a dam created a false sense of security among residents living in the Canada del Oro Valley floodplain, near Catalina, Arizona. The earthen dam was constructed for recreational purposes and not as an approved flood control structure. The community has indicated that a long period of dry conditions led to unregulated residential development within the floodplain.

Following a wildfire which burned 35 percent of the existing vegetation and increased storm water run-off within the valley, a moderate rainfall caused flash flooding resulting in the evacuation of 40 residents and the swift-water rescue of two children. A much larger rainfall in the same area could lead to devastating flash-floods and eventual erosion of the earthen dam caused by fast-moving floodwaters.

With a PDM grant, approximately 50 properties including single family homes, mobile homes and commercial properties will be purchased under a voluntary acquisition project and the area will be converted to open space in perpetuity.

### **Darlington, Wisconsin Plan and Acquisition Project**

Darlington began its success in PDM with a planning sub-grant in 2002 which resulted in the City's All-Hazard Mitigation Plan. With a long history of damaging floods, the City is taking action to reduce the number of repeatedly flooded properties. One of the latest projects funded through the PDM program is the purchase and removal of a light industrial building located in the floodway. Having flooded four times in the past 60 years, the building has sustained structural and content damage as well as business interruption losses. The building will be demolished and the site will become part of the Pecatonica Riverside Park.

As of January 2006, 19 commercial buildings were floodproofed and another 14 were purchased and removed from the floodplain, through PDM and FEMA's other grant programs – the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program.