

# Florida Mitigation Projects Prove Successful

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**ORLANDO, Fla.** – Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Without mitigation actions, people's safety, financial security and self-reliance may be jeopardized.

A 2017 [report](#) showed mitigation funding **can save the nation \$6 in future disaster costs for every \$1 spent** on hazard mitigation.

Florida is no stranger to [disasters](#). In the past several decades the state has experienced almost two dozen hurricanes; 20 flooding events; 19 tropical storms and nine tornadoes, among other catastrophic events.

Three of Florida's successful mitigation projects are:

## **Oakland Park, Broward County**

After nearly 400 homes in Oakland Park were significantly damaged by rain and high tides six years ago, city officials sought solutions to prevent future flooding.

In 2015, a new drainage project was completed with \$5.4 million from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The project included installing drainage catch basins on targeted streets and a pump station with four pumps, two control gates, a flood wall and wetland area.

Despite high tidal surges and high canal levels in September 2017 when Hurricane Irma hit the area no flood waters entered homes in the communities served by the new system.

## **St. Augustine, St. Johns County**

John Oliver's 950-square-foot cinder-block home in St. Augustine was significantly damaged by Hurricane Matthew in 2016.



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After researching how to elevate his home, Oliver used National Flood Insurance Program claim funds and a U.S. Small Business Administration loan to rebuild and raise it to comply with local regulations.

The project was nearing completion when Hurricane Irma hit in September 2017. The storm approached St. Augustine as a Category 2 storm with sustained winds of 110 mph and a 3.5 foot storm surge.

Oliver said his home survived the storm for two reasons—it had been elevated and he had gone above code in reconstructing the roof.

“In rebuilding we went above the codes,” he said. “We elevated the home 9.5 feet above its original height. Being compliant paid off.”

### **Miami Beach, Miami-Dade County**

The main campus of Mount Sinai Medical Center—Miami Beach’s only hospital—sits on a barrier island, prone to flooding and hurricane damage.

In 2005, the hospital enhanced wind resiliency on seven buildings and placed two generators 30 feet above the flood plain in a building that can withstand winds of 180 mph.

The total cost for these projects was nearly \$30 million; funding included a \$22 million grant from FEMA.

In 2017, Hurricane Irma’s damaging winds swept across Florida. Mount Sinai Medical Center reported no major or significant damage to its facilities and infrastructure.

For more information on mitigation, visit [archive.floridadisaster.org/mitigation/Hazard/](https://archive.floridadisaster.org/mitigation/Hazard/), [www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance](https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance) and [www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/30627](https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/30627).

For more Hurricane Irma recovery information, visit [www.FEMA.gov/IrmaFL](https://www.FEMA.gov/IrmaFL), or follow us [@FEMARegion4 on Twitter](https://twitter.com/FEMARegion4) and on [FEMA’s Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/FEMA).

*Helping people before, during and after disasters.*



*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 800-462-7585.*

*FEMA's temporary housing assistance and grants for public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan. However, applicants who receive SBA loan applications must submit them to SBA to be eligible for assistance that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses.*

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