

York County 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

By Roy Livergood, Senior Planner

What is hazard mitigation and hazard mitigation planning?

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines hazard mitigation as “any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a hazard event. The primary purpose of mitigation planning is to systematically identify policies, actions, and tools that can be used to implement those actions.” Pre-disaster mitigation actions are those taken in advance of a hazard event to interrupt the cycle of damage, reconstruction and repeated damage. Successful mitigation actions can be a cost effective means of reducing future losses.

Why do we need a hazard mitigation plan?

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, (DMA 2000), requires the development and submission of a hazard mitigation plan by not only the State, but also local governments (counties/municipalities) as a condition of receiving various types of pre- and post- disaster assistance for mitigation efforts as identified under the Stafford Act. The three main programs providing hazard mitigation assistance include:

- **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**
The HMGP provides funding for long-term hazard mitigation measures following major disaster declarations. Funding is available to implement projects in accordance with state, territorial, federally-recognized tribal, and local priorities.
- **Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)**
The PDM program provides funds on an annual basis for hazard mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects. FEMA

provides funding for measures to reduce or eliminate overall risk from natural hazards.

- **Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)**
The FMA program provides funds on an annual basis so that measures can be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk of flood damage to buildings insured under the National Flood Insurance Program. The FMA program for Fiscal Year 2013 and beyond includes provisions to mitigate Severe Repetitive Loss and Repetitive Loss properties.



More information on these grants is available at:
<https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>.

Beyond grant eligibility, the Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies hazard areas and mitigation actions that can be used by municipalities in land use planning, emergency management planning, and public awareness. Other organizations, such as the York County Planning Commission (YCPC), are also using information contained in the Plan for planning outreach, consideration of grant requests, and project funding.

Planning Perspectives is a newsletter created by the staff of the York County Planning Commission. It covers current topics of interest in the field of Urban and Regional Planning. If you have a suggested topic for future issues, please contact Felicia Dell at 771-9870.

What requirements does the Plan place on my municipality?

The York County 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update is an awareness document that identifies potential hazards and actions to deal with those hazards. It is a multi-hazard (natural and human-made) and multi-municipal (information provided at municipal level for all 72 municipalities) plan guided by a local planning team and based on input from York County municipalities, adjacent counties, the public, and related organizations. The only requirement by FEMA is for your municipality to recognize the Plan by adopting it via resolution. This adoption places no requirements on the municipality to implement the actions identified. However, it is hoped that municipalities will take the information into consideration as part of land use planning, emergency management planning, and outreach to residents, as well as, strive to address hazard mitigation when feasible.

What information is provided in the Plan?

The Plan contains 8 Sections as follows:

- Section 1 introduces the Plan,
- Section 2 provides a brief community profile, which addresses geography/environment, population/demographics, and land use /development,
- Section 3 gives a description of the planning process used to create the Plan,
- Section 4 identifies the hazards affecting the County and profiles and ranks them,
- Section 5 summarizes the tools available to address hazards and assesses municipal capability to implement hazard mitigation,
- Section 6 identifies goals, objectives, and actions to address the identified hazards,
- Section 7 identifies how the Plan will implemented, evaluated, and updated, and
- Section 8 describes adoption of the Plan.

What hazards are identified for York County?

There are 23 hazards identified by the Plan. The hazards are ranked by probability, impact, spatial extent, warning time, and duration to arrive a risk factor of high, moderate or low.

- **Hazards ranked as high include** nuclear incidents, flood/flash flood/ice jam, winter storms, environ-

mental hazards, radon exposure, urban fires/explosions, pandemic and infectious disease, extreme temperatures, and terrorism.

- **Hazards ranked as moderate include** mass food and animal feed contamination, hurricane/tropical storm/nor'easter, tornado/windstorm, dam failure, hailstorm, and wildfire.
- **Hazards ranked as low include** lighting strike, drought, levee failure, subsidence/sinkhole, invasive species, earthquake, civil disturbance, and landslide.



What are the goals of the Plan?

Four goals are identified by the Plan and include (1) reducing the possibility of injury or death to county residents and potential losses or damages from the identified hazards, (2) encouraging a coordinated effort in dealing with hazard mitigation, (3) promoting proper planning and disaster resistant development, and (4) increasing public understanding, support, and demand for hazard mitigation. In support of these goals, there are 10 objectives and many mitigation actions identified that cover all 72 municipalities and the 23 identified hazards.

For more information, please contact:

Roy Livergood at (717) 771-9870 ext. 1756 or
rlivergood@ycpc.org

Additionally, the Plan and related information are available on the YCPC website at:
<http://www.ycpc.org/environment/hazard-mitigation-planning-and-implementation.html>