



GLOUCESTER COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

2021 Update

What is a Hazard Mitigation?

Hazard mitigation is an action to help reduce long-term risks caused by hazards or disasters, such as flooding, earthquakes, or wildfires. The purpose of hazard mitigation is to protect people and structures, and minimize the costs of disaster response and recovery. Hazard mitigation can take many forms: capital projects, policies, education, and environmental protection.

Proactive mitigation leads to more cost-effective projects. By contrast, reactive mitigation, tends to lead to severe damage and often more costly fixes; it simply costs too much to address the effects of disasters only after they happen. A surprising amount of damage can be prevented if we can anticipate where and how disasters occur, and take steps to prevent those damages.

What is a Hazard Mitigation Plan?

A hazard mitigation plan (HMP) is “the representation of the jurisdiction’s commitment to reduce risks from natural hazards, serving as a guide for decision makers as they commit resources to reducing the effects of natural hazards” (44 CFR 201.6). HMPs establish and maintain eligibility for grant funds. The planning process is as important as the plan itself because it creates a framework for governments to reduce the negative impacts from future disasters on lives, property, and the economy.

Hazard mitigation planning can significantly reduce the physical, financial, and emotional losses caused by disasters. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is federal legislation that establishes a pre-disaster hazard mitigation program and new requirements for the national post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). It encourages and rewards state and local pre- and post-disaster planning and promotes sustainability. Completion of an HMP will result in more effective risk reduction projects and in a faster and more efficient allocation of funding.

Purpose

The Gloucester County Office of Emergency Management is leading the update of the countywide HMP. This plan is an opportunity to detail a variety of potential hazards that could affect some or all of our residents and will also allow the county and participating municipalities to be eligible for future mitigation funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The goal of the plan is to identify projects that can reduce damages from future hazards. The plan will include a risk assessment and a hazard mitigation strategy. The primary hazards of concern in Gloucester County include: Coastal Erosion, Dam/Levee Failure, Disease Outbreak, Drought, Earthquake, Extreme Temperatures, Flood, Geologic, Hazardous Materials, Hurricane, Invasive Species, Nor'Easter, Severe Weather, Severe Winter Weather, Wildfire, and Utility Failure.

The study will focus on existing buildings and potential future development, infrastructure, and lifelines that might be impacted. Lifelines include but are not limited to municipal buildings and infrastructure such as power-generation facilities, water utilities, roadways, railroads and communication systems.



What are the benefits of participating in the Hazard Mitigation Plan?

There are numerous benefits to participating in the HMP including:

- Awareness of risk and vulnerabilities
- Identification of implementable strategies and funding sources
- Reduction of hazard impact (save lives, property, and the local economy)
- Creation of partnerships and develop comprehensive approaches that enhance project grant funding opportunities.
- Pooling of resources and reduce their level of effort while avoiding duplication of effort.
- Creation of more resilient communities; bounce-back from disasters faster!

What is required in a Hazard Mitigation Plan?

FEMA regulations require that the public must be engaged in all phases of the plan's development. The HMP should review and incorporate existing plans and programs that can support or enhance hazard mitigation. The plan must assess the risk to natural hazards that may impact the planning area and identify and prioritize mitigation actions that can be taken. The HMP must also include a strategy for maintaining the plan, which must be updated every 5 years.

FAQs

What is mitigation? Any sustained action taken to reduce/eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a hazard event.

How can you reduce/eliminate risk? Identify mitigation actions/ projects/activities or processes that can include 1) Local plans and regulations; 2) Structure and infrastructure projects; 3) Natural systems protection; 4) Education and awareness programs.

What grant funding is available? FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding is available with a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan (annual and post-disaster opportunities).

How can I support the plan? Take the public survey! This will help us obtain input and get a better understanding of public preparedness for hazard events.

Where can I see the 2021 plan? Sections of the draft plan will be available late-2021 for download, review and comment on the Gloucester County HMP website at:
<https://www.gloucestercountynjhmp2021.com/>

Planning Process



For more information, please visit our website:

<https://www.gloucestercountynjhmp2021.com/>

For more information about this process, please contact:



Gloucester County Office of Emergency Management
856-307-7100

Live or work in Gloucester County? Take our survey!
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GCHMPPublicSurvey>

-or-

scan the QR code to complete the survey

