



Cook County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan

Information Bulletin #1

The Hazard Mitigation Plan

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.

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-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.

What are the benefits of participating in the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan?

There are numerous benefits to local jurisdictions of participating in the multi-jurisdictional HMP including:

- ◆ The multi-jurisdictional planning effort identifies and creates partnerships that enhance grant funding opportunities.
- ◆ Multi-jurisdictional plans enable comprehensive approaches to mitigation of hazards that affect several jurisdictions in a specific geographic area.
- ◆ It enables partners within the planning area to pool resources and reduce their level of effort while avoiding duplication of effort.
- ◆ Furthermore, FEMA prefers multi-jurisdictional planning efforts.

Cook County, Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM), has contracted with Tetra Tech to facilitate the planning process and draft the Cook County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan. Tetra Tech will follow a seven phase planning process:

- ◆ Organize resources
- ◆ Conduct risk assessment
- ◆ Develop public involvement strategy
- ◆ Set goals, objectives and actions
- ◆ Implement plan maintenance strategy
- ◆ Write the plan
- ◆ Facilitate plan review/adoption

This process is modeled after FEMA’s Community Rating System’s planning process. The final HMP will consist of two volumes: one covering the whole planning area and the other with jurisdictional-specific annexes that address the specific mitigation actions of the jurisdictions. Tetra Tech has developed templates to assist in the drafting of a multi-jurisdictional HMP. The Cook County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan must be completed by June 30, 2014.

The information herein further describes efforts and roles of your organization in ensuring the project’s success.

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.

