



FEMA

Mitigation:

A community plan for resilience and sustainability



A Plan for All Seasons Shawnee, OK - The Citizen Potawatomi Nation

Writing and researching the (hazard mitigation) plan enabled the (Citizen Potawatomi Nation) leadership to regain a sense of urgency to support projects that helped us grow a sustainable future, guarding the lives and property of those who live or visit our land.

Tim Zientek, Safety and Housekeeping Director

FEMA – Region 6
800 North Loop 288
Denton, Texas 76208

Disasters threaten life and property, but a shared commitment, from Federal to local to individual mitigation decisions, can significantly reduce damage and loss by strengthening the resilience of a community—the ability to recover when disasters occur. Through mitigation and insurance actions, FEMA looks to assist in creating communities that are able to not only survive hazards, but come through them safely, quickly, and securely.

The effects of natural and manmade disasters have become more frequent, far-reaching, and widespread. As a result, preserving the safety, security, and prosperity of all parts of our society is becoming more challenging. Our Nation’s traditional approach to managing the risks associated with these disasters relies heavily on the government. However, today’s changing reality is affecting all levels of government in their efforts to improve our Nation’s resilience while grappling with the limitations of their capabilities.

Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. This is achieved through risk analysis, which results in information that provides a foundation for mitigation activities that reduce risk, and flood insurance that protects financial investment. Mitigation activities seek to reduce the community’s vulnerability to the impacts of natural disasters.

How Can Mitigation Enhance life in my Community?

Community officials and tribal leaders understand the needs of their community and the vision for their future. Including mitigation efforts in community development and planning efforts provides a value to community residents and business owners by creating safer communities and reducing loss of life and property.

Mitigation activities include:

- Complying with or exceeding NFIP floodplain management regulations.
- Adopting and enforcing more stringent building codes, seismic design standards, flood-proofing and wind-bracing requirements for new construction and retrofitting of existing homes and businesses.
- Acquiring damaged homes or businesses in flood-prone areas, relocating the structures, and returning the property to open space, wetlands or recreational uses.
- Building community shelters and tornado safe rooms to help protect people in their homes, public buildings and schools in hurricane- and tornado-prone areas.

To embrace the importance of mitigation activities and make them a priority, there must be a shared community shared understanding for the return on investment that mitigation provides, as well as confidence that steady, reliable assistance is available.



Working Together to Promote Resilience in our Community

Advancement toward resilience must be executed in partnership with State, tribal, and local governments, the private sector, and individuals, as well as within FEMA and across Federal Agencies. Mitigation and Insurance programs must connect with the Whole Community. This calls for proactive engagement at all levels with emergency management, floodplain managers, businesses, neighborhood associations, community groups, faith-based and community-based organizations, ethnic centers, and other civic-minded organizations.

There currently exists a limited public understanding of risk and mitigation concepts throughout the nation. FEMA recommends employing a more comprehensive communication and education effort throughout the nation to

demonstrate the value of mitigation to communities, partners, and individuals. It is our goal to support the mitigation and insurance mission at the local level by working with communities to increase the understanding of risk so that our citizens, States, tribes, local governments, and other partners can recognize the value of taking actions to avoid, minimize the effects of, and prepare for hazards. This is information on which people may stake their lives, homes, livelihoods, and communities.

Mitigation is a critical component of FEMA's overall mission, seeking to reduce the Nation's vulnerability to the impacts of disasters. Effective mitigation can break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. It supports preparedness, eases response, speeds recovery, and lessens the financial burden on communities and our Nation.

Our Commitment

At the FEMA Region 6 offices in Denton, Texas, FEMA Mitigation Division Staff assist communities within the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas through the following disciplines:

Risk Analysis – Mitigation begins with a thorough assessment of the potential and actual impact a natural disaster could (or did) have on a particular community. Through its mapping programs FEMA's Risk Analysis staff work with local communities to assess and delineate natural flood risks within communities. Dam Safety, Building Science and Earthquake Professionals also work within the Risk Analysis branch.

Hazard Mitigation Planning – The planning process promoted by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is as important as the resulting plan because it creates a framework for governments to reduce the negative impacts from future disasters on lives, property, and the economy. To assist with mitigation planning, FEMA works with the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) to offer a variety of guidance and training.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance – Communities submit grant applications through their State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) for projects that reduce the effects of natural hazards to life and property. Both disaster and non-disaster grants may provide funds to assist communities in reducing effects of future disasters within the community.

Floodplain Management and Insurance – FEMA's compliance staff assist local communities in their daily operation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The NFIP promotes corrective and preventative measures for reducing flood damage within a community through zoning, subdivisions or buildings, and special-purpose floodplain ordinance. Flood Insurance is available for individual home owners, renters and business owners.

Community Education & Outreach - Promote effective hazard mitigation through community education, outreach, training, and coordination with the public and private sectors.

Our Mission

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a Nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Region 6 Contacts

Sandra Keefe

Mitigation Division Director
Sandra.Keefe@fema.dhs.gov

Gary Zimmerer

Deputy Mitigation Division Director
Gary.Zimmerer@fema.dhs.gov

Mitigation Div – Region 6

800 North Loop 288
Denton, Texas 76208



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