

Somerset County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update



Natural hazards are a part of life throughout Somerset County. All of these hazard events have the potential to cause property loss, economic hardship, environmental degradation and threats to public health and safety including loss of life. An important part of emergency management involves **hazard mitigation planning** aimed at minimizing these impacts and improving resiliency. The Plan describes the hazard risks that can occur, identifies vulnerable community assets, and presents mitigation strategies comprised of actions and projects that will be implemented to reduce key hazard risks.



Background and Purpose

The **Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan for Somerset County** meets the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (or "DMA 2000") and allows for potential future Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding opportunities for Bernards Township. Its development was led by the County, and planning costs were off-set by a FEMA planning grant. The County opted to use what FEMA calls a "multi-jurisdictional" approach as a form of municipal "shared service", meaning that instead of just being a plan for the County government, every municipality participated as an equal partner. As such, the plan includes individual **municipal HMP Annexes** that have been adopted at the local level. The plan also includes a capability assessment, risk assessment, mitigation strategies and utilization and maintenance guide.

To stay in compliance with DMA 2000, and remain eligible for funding, the plan must be updated every

five years. The County has once again obtained FEMA grant funding to update the multi-jurisdictional plan. Representatives from Bernards Township and various stakeholder groups within the County, and the public will have opportunities to attend meetings and provide feedback throughout the update process.

Planning Timeline

- *The County's first hazard mitigation plan was adopted in 2008 and the plan was updated in 2014.*
- *Updates are required every five years.*
- *The second plan update process began in July 2017 and is targeted for completion in the fall of 2018.*

Natural disasters cannot be prevented. However, by implementing the Hazard Mitigation Projects identified in the Plan, we can reduce vulnerabilities, risks and future damage; while expediting effective recovery efforts.

For More Information

For questions or other feedback, or to find out how you can become involved, please contact your local Hazard Mitigation and/or Emergency Management Coordinator; the Somerset County Planning Division: (908) 231-7021; or the County Office of Emergency Management: (908) 725-5070. Information is also available on our web site: <http://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/public-health-safety/hazard-mitigation>.

