

INTRODUCTION

Rockland County has received grant funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to prepare a natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The primary purpose of a hazard mitigation planning project is to identify community policies, actions, and tools for implementation over the long term that will result in a reduction in risk and potential for future losses as a result of natural hazards.

We are undertaking this process in order to meet the requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). Passed by the President in October of 2000, this Act mandates that all states and local governments must have hazard mitigation plans approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be eligible for certain types of federal disaster mitigation project funding (under such programs as the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program). To be compliant with the DMA 2000, a community must either: (a) prepare its own hazard mitigation plan, or (b) participate in a “multi-jurisdictional” plan development process.

Rockland County has elected to use its grant funding to lead the effort for preparing what is called a “multi-jurisdictional” plan. We have sought involvement from all the municipalities within Rockland County. Municipalities are by no means required to participate. However, some advantages to participating in a multi-jurisdictional process include:

- All jurisdictions who participate in the process will be compliant with DMA 2000 once FEMA approves the final plan and the jurisdiction’s local governing body formally adopts the final plan.
- Multi-jurisdictional planning committees can provide a forum for engaging in partnerships that could provide technical, financial, and/or staff resources in your effort to reduce the effects, and hence the costs, of hazards.
- Smaller jurisdictions can benefit from the additional resources and expertise that collaboration can bring.
- Multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans are practical for addressing issues best dealt with on a larger scale, which do not recognize political boundaries.
- Multi-jurisdictional planning creates economies of scale and enables pooling of limited resources.

While natural disasters cannot be prevented from occurring, the continued implementation of our hazard mitigation plan over the long-term will gradually, but steadily, lessen the impacts associated with hazard events in our county.

The completion of the County’s Natural Hazard Mitigation will provide us with concise information as well as outlining a comprehensive plan for minimizing, and in some cases, eliminating these vulnerabilities.