

Hazard Mitigation Planning

At a Glance



Questions addressed in Mitigation Plans:

- What are the potential natural hazards of greatest concern—snowstorms, high winds, flooding, drought, etc.?
- What are the risks - flooding, power loss, bridge scouring, riverbank collapse, etc.?
- What are we currently doing to make the community a safer place - culvert upgrade, stormwater management, preparedness education, etc.?
- Who and what could be impacted by these hazards?
- What more can be done to mitigate the impacts of such hazards?
- What are the obstacles to implementing needed improvements - cost, political opposition, not feasible technically, etc.

Fires, and Storms, and Floods, oh my!

Concerned about flooding, freezing rain, drought, hurricanes, the impacts of downed trees and loss of power resulting from New England storms with high winds? Join us to learn and share how town officials are preparing your community to be a safer place. Citizens are encouraged to get engaged in the plan making process. **Contact your local Emergency Management Director or Lakes Region Planning Commission staff to learn more.**

What is a Hazard Mitigation Plan?

In cooperation with the NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NH HSEM), the Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC) works with several of its member communities each year to update local Hazard Mitigation Plans.

The Hazard Mitigation Plans are designed to mitigate each community's vulnerability to natural hazards. The local plan serves as a means to reduce future losses from hazard events before they occur. This local initiative is guided by a community-based Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee, with the LRPC providing technical support. The structure for plan development is provided through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) *Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide* which ensures that the community has considered the content of the New Hampshire State *Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023)* and meets FEMA requirements for content and opportunities for public input.

Why Update a Plan?

Hazard Mitigation Plan updates are a chance for community officials and citizens to discuss the impacts of recent hazards and assess the probability of occurrence, vulnerability, and extent (risk) of future events. The result of this work leads to practical steps that might be taken to help the community reduce damage and loss.

Having an up-to-date Hazard Mitigation Plan in place enables many communities to allocate their resources more effectively. It can also be a useful tool for leveraging additional sources of funding in the event of a disaster. FEMA requires that local Hazard Mitigation Plans be updated every five years at a minimum.

Steps for Success

- ◆ Create a Planning Team - candidates include residents, police, fire, EMD, Selectmen, Planning Board members, and interested parties.
- ◆ Document the local impact of recent events.
- ◆ Review community capabilities.
- ◆ Assess local risk.
- ◆ Develop actions to mitigate the potential local impacts of natural hazards
- ◆ Review and adopt the plan!

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Frequently Asked Questions

- **What does it cost to update a Hazard Mitigation Plan?**

Updates are funded by FEMA through NHHSEM with a local match requirement of 25 percent. The cost is prorated based on community size. Most communities use Planning Team members' time as a match to the grant funds. Typically, the Team meets four times for a couple of hours to update the plan.

- **My town has an Emergency Operations Plan, do we need a Hazard Mitigation Plan too?**

Both the Emergency Operations and Hazard Mitigation Plans identify potential hazard events and the resources available to address them. The Emergency Operations Plan focus is on how a community responds to an emergency. A local Hazard Mitigation Plan looks at the potential to reduce or minimize the impacts of hazards, loss of life, and cost of repairing and rebuilding after an event.

- **What about human-caused and technological hazards?**

Consideration of human-caused and technological hazards is not a FEMA requirement of a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan.

- **Is a local plan required?**

It is a requirement for communities to have a FEMA-approved plan as a condition of receiving hazard mitigation assistance funding as well as some other federal funding programs. Department heads, planners, and citizens should help in plan development, ultimately the Board of Selectmen adopt the plan.

Straits Road Culvert

New Hampton, NH

Project funded with a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant

