



## Mitigation Plan for Four New Jersey Counties

*There have been many recent reminders of the power and destructive potential of hazards like coastal storms, high winds, and severe winter weather.*

*We can't change the weather, but we can reduce the risk we all face from these natural hazards.*

In April 2014, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem Counties initiated a project to update their Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans that were approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in 2010 and 2011. The hazard mitigation plan update effort is being led by the Counties' Offices of Emergency Management with the assistance of Stuart Wallace, LLC, mitigation planning consultants.

Direct participation in the project is open to all County departments, as well as all incorporated municipalities and recognized government entities within these four counties. In addition, there are opportunities for participation by the public and interested parties.

Important terms related to this project include:

- *Hazards* cause loss of life or injuries, property damage, and economic hardship. The hazard mitigation plan update will address a range of natural hazards including flooding, high winds, and severe winter weather, and dam failures.
- *Hazard mitigation* reduces or eliminates risk of death, injury, or damage to private or public property potentially caused by hazards.
- *Hazard mitigation plans* evaluate potential risk factors and identify hazard mitigation measures to directly address identified risks.
- *Hazard mitigation measures* include activities, programs, or projects such as improving public awareness about hazard risk and mitigation; improving regulations and codes that lead to safer structures; and construction projects to directly reduce potential impacts of hazards.

Hazard mitigation plans are required by FEMA to establish and maintain eligibility for federal hazard mitigation project grants that in turn can help communities implement measures to reduce risk. Hazard mitigation plans must be updated on a five-year cycle to maintain eligibility. For more information, please go to the following FEMA website: <http://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-planning-overview>.

In 2010, FEMA approved the Gloucester County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The corresponding hazard mitigation plans for Camden, Cumberland, and Salem Counties were reviewed and approved by FEMA in 2011. These documents were the result of several years work and were adopted by each County and the majority of the incorporated municipalities. The four counties seek to update the hazard mitigation plans by April 2015 consistent with FEMA requirements.

Key milestones in the project include:

- Kick-off Meetings in May 2014 with Municipal OEM Coordinators for all four counties to review the planning process and initiate working with participating municipalities.
- Work sessions with participating municipalities to review:
  - June, July, or August 2014 – Hazards, risks and concerns, and identify potential risk reduction mitigation measures.
  - Late Summer / early Fall 2014 - Preliminary draft of the updated hazard mitigation plans.
- Fall 2014 - Draft Plan in by the participating municipalities, the general public, and any interested parties.
- FEMA's approval of the updated hazard mitigation plans by Spring 2014.

The county, municipalities, and interested parties are contributing their time and expertise in making sure the updated hazard mitigation plans address issues that are most important to the region's residents, businesses, and property owners. Anyone who has experienced damage or business interruptions from hazard events in the past is especially important to include in the process.

***If you have questions or would like to be involved during the planning process, please visit the project website that is located at <http://nj4hmp.com> and click on "Contact Us".***