



1.0 INTRODUCTION



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1.1 PURPOSE OF A HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) established a requirement that in order for local jurisdictions to remain eligible for Federal disaster assistance and grant funds, they must develop and adopt a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan (HMP) and update that plan every five years. Bergen County adopted its first HMP in 2008, known as Bergen County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (referred to as Bergen County HMP), and conducted the first plan update in 2015 and second HMP in 2021. This Bergen County HMP is the third update to the original plan and is the result of work by County residents, local officials, and stakeholders that participated in the hazard mitigation planning process. The Bergen County HMP captures the continuing attempts made by the County, its jurisdictions, and local stakeholders to identify potential natural and human-based hazards and associated risks to develop an integrated mitigation strategy. Through measures proposed in this plan, Bergen County, New Jersey seeks to substantially reduce and/or eliminate long-term risk to life and properties associated with natural and human-based hazards.

The term “Hazard Mitigation” describes actions that can help reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by hazards or disaster. The HMP process includes identifying local risks and vulnerabilities associated with disasters and developing long-term strategies for protecting people and property from future hazard events. These strategies are essential to breaking the typical disaster cycle of damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Natural hazard mitigation saves \$6 on average for every \$1 spent on federal mitigation grants, according to an analysis by the National Institute of Building Sciences (2018). In other words, hazard mitigation actions and projects save more than they cost. In addition to natural hazard mitigation, this version of the Bergen County HMP includes mitigation strategies against human-based hazards, including terrorism and cyber-attacks.

1.2 SCOPE

The Bergen County HMP update has been prepared to meet requirements set forth by the FEMA and the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) in order for the County to be eligible for funding and technical assistance from State and Federal hazard mitigation programs. This multi-jurisdictional plan includes participation and will be adopted by Bergen County and all 70 municipalities. Bergen County and the municipalities participating in the plan have undergone hazard mitigation planning and related activities in the past. Previous and ongoing hazard mitigation activities are documented throughout the plan.

1.3 ORGANIZING THE PLAN

The Bergen County HMP update is a comprehensive update to the 2021 Bergen County HMP. The Plan is organized into the following sections:

1.0 Introduction: Discusses the purpose of hazard mitigation planning and the planning requirements for the HMP.

2.0 Community Profile & Asset Inventory: Provides an overview of Bergen County and discusses population and the economy, the built environment, and ecosystems and natural assets.

3.0 Planning Process: Discusses the planning process, the planning team that led this HMP update, County, stakeholder, and municipal participation, and public participation.

4.0 Risk Assessment: Identifies the hazards of concern and an analysis on the vulnerability and risks posed by each hazard.

5.0 Capability Assessment: Discusses State building codes and the unique planning, regulatory, administrative, technical, financial, and education and outreach capabilities present in Bergen County. This section also describes how the County and its municipalities integrate their plans and regulations with hazard mitigation.

6.0 Mitigation Strategy: Bergen County's mitigation strategy is the blueprint for reducing potential future losses from hazards. This section includes the update process, mitigation goals and objectives, the evaluation and prioritization of mitigation actions, a summary of each municipality's mitigation strategy, and Bergen County's mitigation strategy.

7.0 Plan Maintenance: Explains the plan maintenance process for monitoring, evaluating, and updating the HMP once the plan is approved by FEMA.

8.0 Plan Adaptation: Discusses the County and municipal HMP adoption process.

Appendices Volume I – Jurisdictional Information: Each municipality has their own appendix detailing their local community profile and mitigation strategy, including the following information:

- Planning Team and Participation: lists the names of local officials and representatives that attended the municipal meetings and helped write the municipal appendices.
- Community Profile: provides an overview of the municipality; land use, development, and growth since the previous plan (including recent, known, or anticipated major development and infrastructure); and information on demographics and vulnerable populations.
- Hazard Identification: includes each municipality's hazard ranking, an explanation for that hazard ranking, and significant storms events since the last plan update.
- Risk Assessment: includes municipal National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) statistics, vulnerability of the built environment, and risk maps, including current flood risk, future flood risk (NJ Inland Design Flood Elevation and Sea Level Rise (if applicable), and Wildland Urban Classification (if applicable).
- Capability Assessment: includes tables of local planning and regulatory; administrative and technical; education and outreach; and financial capabilities.
- Mitigation Strategy: provides an overall mitigation strategy since the previous plan and looking forward towards the next five years, completed or removed actions, and new and ongoing actions.

Appendices Volume II – Other Plan Materials: Includes the FEMA Plan Review Tool, resolution template, Community Rating System (CRS) crosswalk, annual progress report, adopted local resolutions, engagement documentation, and a summary capability assessment table.

1.4 AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

Authority for this plan originates from the following federal sources:

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C., Section 322, as amended
- CFR Title 44, Parts 201 and 206
- Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, Public Law 106-390, as amended
- National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 4001 *et seq.*

Authority for this plan originates from the following State of New Jersey sources:

- State of New Jersey 2024 State Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Assembly No. 4691, State of New Jersey 220th Legislature, introduced 10/3/2022, updated 1/8/2024

FEMA's *Local Mitigation Planning Policy Guide*, effective April 11, 2025, was the primary guide used for the development of this plan. Previous FEMA guides including the 386 series and information available from NJOEM on hazard mitigations were used to guide this plan's development.