

Chapter 9 Action Plan

This chapter contains the 2015 Jersey County Natural Hazards Mitigation Action Plan. The action items presented in this Chapter were developed from the original February 2008 Plan. The Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee's meetings and discussions and the list of recommendations presented in Chapter 4 through 6. Some of the Plans recommendations may be selected for implementation when resources become available and others may serve as a "building block"

9.1. Goals

The following five goals, generated by Jersey County residents, provide overall direction for the identification and implementation of the elements of this action plan.

Goal 1 Minimize Loss of Life

Objectives:

- Develop improved systems of delivering warnings about natural hazards to county residents, particularly those in rural areas.
- Develop improved communication systems for emergency responders that will allow them to respond to incidents occasioned by the occurrence of various natural hazards.
- Develop public education campaigns designed to educate residents about steps they can take to minimize the impact of various natural hazards.
- Conduct periodic tests of the county's emergency operation plan.
- Adopt uniform countywide building codes that promote the development of commercial and residential structures capable of withstanding acceptable levels of natural hazard impact.

Goal 2 Protect Public Health

Objectives:

- Develop public education efforts designed to educate the public about measures individual citizens can take to reduce the health risks associated with various natural hazards before, during and after the occurrence of such hazards.
- Improve the following programs with eye to the health risks occasioned by hazards determined most likely to affect the county: sanitation, disease surveillance, vector control, vaccination.

Goal 3 Protect and Develop Infrastructure

Objectives:

- Adopt uniform countywide building codes that promote the development of commercial and residential structures capable of withstanding acceptable levels of natural hazard impact.
- Perform regular maintenance on transportation infrastructure including roads and bridges.
- Review building inspection procedures to ensure appropriate attention to hazard mitigation related features.

- Improve sewage and wastewater treatment infrastructure.
- Review building evacuation procedures posted in all county-owned buildings.
- Review evacuation routes on a regular basis to ensure appropriate access in the event of their use.
- Improve communication systems through the use of federal and state grants and private initiatives.

Goal 4 Protect Public Property and Critical Facilities

Objectives:

- Review building inspection procedures to ensure appropriate attention to hazard mitigation related features.
- Adopt uniform countywide building codes that promote the development of public buildings capable of withstanding acceptable levels of natural hazard impact.
- Retrofit any existing critical facility deemed unreasonably susceptible to natural hazards.
- Ensure that all public buildings are appropriately insured.
- Review security of critical facilities.

Goal 5 Protect Private Property

Objectives:

- Adopt uniform countywide building codes that promote the development of public buildings capable of withstanding acceptable levels of natural hazard impact.
- Adopt and/or maintain County ordinances that minimize the risk of exposure to the most prevalent natural hazards.
- Conduct public information campaigns designed to educate citizens about the potential benefits of the following activities: retrofitting, flood proofing, and insuring property.

9.2. Guidelines

A number of Illinois jurisdictions have provided examples to guide Jersey County in the preparation of our hazard mitigation plan. From the examples we have identified the following seven guidelines to guide us in reviewing mitigation measures, recommendations (found at the end of Chapters 4-9), and the action items in this chapter.

Guideline 1. Focus natural hazards mitigation efforts on tornadoes, floods, thunderstorms and winter storms.

Guideline 2. Encourage people to assume some responsibility for their own protection.

Guideline 3. New developments should not create new exposures to damage from natural hazards.

Guideline 4. Local initiatives should focus on protecting citizens and public property.

Guideline 5. Seek county, state, and federal support for special projects.

Guideline 6. Preserve open space in hazardous areas, especially where they are sensitive natural areas and agricultural land.

Guideline 7. Be consistent with existing plans.

Each action item has four subheadings: a summary of the recommendation for action; a discussion of the action; an indication of the person or agency responsible for the action; and means for assessing the effectiveness of the action. Each of the action items is cross referenced to Chapters in the mitigation plan. The authorities responsible for implementing these actions fall into three categories:

- Jersey County legislative bodies—laws and regulations
- Jersey County executive authorities—law enforcement
- Jersey County civic bodies—public information campaigns

9.3 Jersey County Has Identified Ten Action Items

The core hazard mitigation team, chaired by the county code administrator and the chair of the political science department at Principia College, reviewed the preliminary hazard mitigation report and compiled several dozen possible mitigation actions suggested in the report. The core team consulted with various county officials to assess the political receptiveness of the potential actions, given the difficult fiscal situation of the county and deep reluctance of citizens to tolerate increased taxes. The core hazard mitigation team pared the list of potential mitigation actions to ten items.

Following the priority setting meeting, the core mitigation team reviewed the prioritization and revised each of the proposed actions to incorporate input from the meeting. Representatives from the core team then met with the county board chair to review the proposed actions. Central to this discussion was the cost and the possible sources of funding for the various actions. Based on their discussion, one action item was removed from the list in recognition that the item would not be able to gain sufficient support from the county board at the current time. The team and county board chair agreed that the item should remain on the agenda of the hazard mitigation team for continued consideration and, especially, identification of financial resources beyond the county.

The team also discussed with the county board chair the appropriate overall structure for implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and updating the plan. While each action will have its own designated implementation authority and may have separate and independent sources of funding and resources, the county will retain overall responsibility and authority for the plan.

The following ten proposed hazard mitigation actions—in priority order—reflect alignment with mitigation goals, ability to mitigate hazards, appreciation of the cost of the actions, and an understanding of the political realities of the current situation.

9.4 Administrative Action

Action Item 1: This Jersey County Multi-Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan adoption

Adoption of the Plan by resolution of the County Board, City Councils, and Village Trustees. Each agency resolutions should adopt the action items pertinent to the community and assign a person responsible. (Chapter 1 and 10)

Cost: Staff time

Deadline: Accomplished

Benefits: Adoption of the Plan ensures that all stakeholders are authorized to implement action items with available resources. Adoption is also a requirement for recognition of the Plan by mitigation funding programs, including the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, the FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance Program and the CRS.

Action Item 2: Plan Monitoring and Maintenance

The Special Projects Committee recommended to the County Board that the Plan would be overseen by the Jersey County Code Administrator. Meetings will be scheduled at least once a year to evaluate and monitor progress on implementation of the Plan. Jurisdictions participating in the Plan must report annually on its action and goals and any changes that may affect the Plan to the Administrator. The Jersey County ESDA coordinator will also assist with the Plan. (Chapter 1 and 10)

Cost: Staff time

Benefit: A monitoring system helps ensure that the entities and offices responsible for the actions meet their deadlines. Monitoring of the plan would make certain the success of the on-going program as it is critical that the plan remains relevant.

Action Item 3: The Committee on County Service Offices and Public Safety:

This committee will be responsible for making recommendations to the County Board on matters of evaluation of the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. The Committee would be an advisory body and meet at least annually with the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee. Other duties include reviewing mitigation proposals, hearing resident concerns about flood protection and passing the concerns on to the appropriate entity. Scheduled meetings will be published in a newspaper of general circulation. The Special Projects Committee will also oversee the five year update requirement. (Chapter 1 and 10)

Authority: Committee on County Service Offices and Public Safety and the County Board Chairman

Cost: Staff time.

Benefit: Evaluation of the plan is required by the Community Rating System. Continued evaluation of the plan would include changed conditions and progress within the County and municipalities, allowing for revisions to the plan.

9.3.2 Mitigation Plan Action Items

Action Item 4: Jersey County, and local municipalities, should improve and enforce a nationally recognized building code. (Chapters 4, 5)

Jersey County, Elsay, Fieldon, and Grafton have adopted a series of I-codes. Future code revisions should be pursued to strengthen new buildings against hazards. Local communities should consider joining the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS). The program is designed to evaluate code implementation efforts with particular emphasis on hazard mitigation. The county and municipalities should consider funding for safe rooms.

Deadline: Ongoing action item

Cost: Staff time.

Benefit: Building codes cannot be effective unless they are administered and enforced properly. Training the county and municipal staff will provide the best method of understanding the codes and procedures. This will also benefit property owners to understand the importance of the building code standards for new construction. This Action item will improve the hazard protection standards for new construction and will ensure a consistent set of building standards across the County.

Authority: Jersey County Board and City Councils of concerned municipalities. Enforcement of Ordinance to be carried out by the Jersey County Code Administrator and local building inspectors.

Item Action 5: Continue with maintenance of bridge, culvert, and structure monitoring and maintenance. (Chapter 6)

Using Jersey County GIS resources County Highway Dept. design and implement program of monitoring and maintenance of bridges, culverts and other transportation structures.

Deadline: In progress and ongoing.

Cost: In County budget (Motor Fuel Tax Fund); cost sharing with townships.

Benefit: Averting damage to property and structures can be obtained by making sure culverts and streams are not blocked. Even in a small rainstorm a blocked culvert or storm sewer can become deadly.

Authority: Jersey County Board, Jersey County Highway Engineer.

Action Item 6: Jersey County Authorities identify and enforce structure requirements in all future critical facilities construction.

Prepare a checklist for critical facilities to complete to identify if they provide enough protection should they become exposed to a natural hazard. They may be in need of retrofitting. (Chapter 5 Section 5.2)

Deadline: Ongoing

Cost: Staff time and increased construction costs to meet standards (based on projects).

Benefit: Evaluation of current critical facilities provides valuable information for the future development of other facilities as to withstanding future hazard exposures.

Authority: Critical facilities owners, Jersey County Board, local municipalities.

Action Item 7: Monitoring and updating the GIS flood layers and the County and municipalities web sites with information and links for property protection references and measures.

Deadline: Underway (annual mailings). Other communities should design a public campaign for their community needs and utilize their web sites to include floodplain mitigation information and property protection measures.

Cost: Staff time; printing, postage, web site host cost

Benefit: Provide more information to the public and educate the public on steps to take to insure safety from hazards. The State of Illinois provides a web site on disaster preparedness (refer to 5-A in Appendix). (Chapter 7)

Authority: Jersey County, IT personnel, municipalities and web hosts.

Action Item 8: Jersey County, and local municipalities continue to enforce appropriate regulation of subdivisions, dumping, and storm water run-off.

Deadline: Subdivision Ordinance was passed on 9/11/07 by the Jersey County Board and Stormwater Management Ordinance passes in 9/8/2009

Cost: Staff Time

Benefit: Subdivision regulations protect and reduce impact of dumping and storm water run-off. Protecting open space is beneficial in averting damage to other properties. Keeping streams, including drainage ditches, free of debris and dumped material benefits the stream's ability to

convey water, reduced erosion and sedimentation, protects the riparian environment and can reduce flood damage. (Chapter 4 and 6)

Action Item 9: Continuing to engage and expand open space, agricultural lands, and urban forest program. Watershed protections to be developed for Macoupin Creek and Otter Creek watersheds.

Deadline: In progress and ongoing

Cost: The costs vary for each project; individual agencies or organizations will bear the cost for each project.

Benefit: Residents will benefit from the understanding of natural watersheds that will provide protection of property, and improved health and safety during minor and major flood events. Development and agriculture have led to a reduction of stream capacity, and upstream flooding. A restoration of stream capacity may mitigate upstream damage and with regular maintenance it will protect structures and property. With urban forestry programs the loss of power and damage to vehicles and buildings from falling limbs is prevented. Protection of the watersheds is a cost-effective approach to addressing existing and future flood problems. (Chapters 6, 7 and 8) (Chapter 6)

Authority: Jersey County Board, municipalities, IDNR and other public and private agencies.

Action Item 10: Jersey County continues and enhances its effective floodplain management program.

Properties that are exposed to flood damage should be protected through property protection measures that should include acquisition, elevation, or floodproofing. Priority should be given to repetitive loss properties, but all floodplain properties including critical facilities should be included. (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6)

Deadline: Underway and ongoing

Cost: Staff time and technology upgrades. County has been successful of obtaining grants to pay for GIS system, identified by each project.

Benefit:

- better floodplain management
- better monitoring of hazard impact areas (i.e. areas susceptible to fresh flooding)
- removing people from hazard area not only saves lives but saves cost
- exposure to of NFIP will be reduced
- reduction in emergency response as structures are protected or removed from flood prone areas

Authority: Jersey County Board, County Code Administrator, Grafton Floodplain manager.

Action Item 11: Jersey County authorities continue or update a full inventory of critical facilities, which should include schools and other large gathering places (in addition to hospitals and public safety facilities). The inventory should indicate the status of each facility and the retrofitting needs.

The county and municipal agencies along with federal, state and private institutions should ensure that the design or modification of critical facilities should account for all natural hazards and adjacent land uses. Critical facilities in the floodplain should be protected to the 500-year flood event.

Deadline: To be completed over a 4 year period. (Deadline is dictated by availability of funds for staff time and the cooperation of the owners).

Cost: Staff time

Benefit: Keeping critical facilities operational when a disaster strikes is essential to public safety and health. An assessment of the facilities exposure to damage would provide valuable information for future development. This Plan expanded on the list of critical facilities to include churches and assembly halls. (Chapter 5 Sec. 5.3 and Chapter 8 Sec. 7.7.3)

Authority: County, municipal, townships, and federal and state agencies responsible for critical facilities.

Action Item 12: Continue to engage in public information and education program aimed at the retrofitting of residential and business structures, and protection of public and private property, safety measures and understanding of the floodplain.

A countywide natural hazards public information strategy should be developed for the use of the County, municipalities, townships and institutions. The public information strategy should be consistent with the recommendations by the CRS program. (Chapter 4 Sec. 4.9 and Sec. Chapter 7 Sec. 7.8)

Deadline: Ongoing

Cost: Staff time, printing, postage costs

Benefit: There are many benefits to having a well-informed public. The more information that is provided to the public the more aware they are as to what they should do to keep safe and possible death. More self help measures should be implemented if people know about them and are motivated to pursue them. The publications should cover these types of topics:

- Safety and emergency protection measures
- Protection of their property
- Understanding of floods and why the floodplain is regulated
- Importance of wetland protection

Authority: Hazard Mitigation Committee, heads of municipalities and local agencies

9.5 Plan Maintenance

The continuance of the Jersey County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee and the Special Projects Committee is necessary for implementation of the Action Plan. As discussed in Chapter 1 the committee was developed for the development of the original 2008 Plan and the 2015 updated Plan. The committee has met twice a year to track implementation of the action items discussed in the Plan. The meetings were recorded to keep track of the suggestions for the development of the Plan. All meetings were open to the public and they were encouraged to participate.