Do It Yourself Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The following is guidance for counties to lead navigate their Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update process. Please remember, you are not required create a new plan, only to update the existing plans which have already passed Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) review at least once. Most of your efforts will focus on the following sections:

For More Information
Ernest Szabo
State Hazard Mitigation Planner
Bureau of Recovery and Mitigation
Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency

1310 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA, 17110
Telephone: (717) 651-2159
Fax: (717) 772-8972
Email: erszabo@pa.gov
www.pema.pa.gov

- Community Profile: focusing on updating the profile, especially the populations and demographics and the land use and development sections;
- Planning Process: documenting the process undertaken for the update;
- Risk Assessment: updating the risk and vulnerability from each hazard;
- Capability Assessment: focusing on current local and county capabilities; and,
- Mitigation Strategy: reviewing past actions and updating Strategy based on this review and the updated Community Profile, Risk Assessment, and Capability Assessment.

The update process should begin **24 months** ahead of the plan expiration date. The *Pennsylvania All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Standard Operating Guide* (SOG) includes details of how to update the HMP, as well as a schedule for the update. While the schedule shows an 18-month process, this is more of a 24-month process, so please plan ahead. The SOG is included here: http://www.pema.pa.gov/responseandrecovery/Disaster-Assistance/Documents/PA%20HMP%20Standard%20Operating%20Guide.pdf. Please contact Ernie Szabo, contact information above, if you have difficulties downloading this.

The following sections include the steps for the update of the HMP to take to ensure a FEMA-approved plan before your current plan expires.

1. Apply for Hazard Mitigation Assistance

Contact Ernie Szabo, contact information above, for assistance with this.

2. Build the Planning Team

More than 24 months before the current plan expires.

Review the existing HMP to gather the former Planning Team information. Contact Planning Team members and other stakeholders as needed, in writing, to re-establish the Planning Team.

Look at inviting more folks to include all potential stakeholders; every organization that has assets in your county, passes through your county or could be effected by hazards in your county. Invite lots of people, you are not responsible if they do not participate, but are responsible to ensure they are aware of the process and are invited. Document the invitation process and the responses. Suggested planning team invites include, but are not limited to:

- All county departments especially all planners and people with Geographic Information Systems capabilities
- All municipal governments
- Fire Departments, Ambulance Companies

- Hospitals and other residential health care facilities to include elder care facilities
- Organizations that care for, or advocate for, persons with disabilities
- School districts, any other educational institution
  - Particularly higher education institutions; involve an environmental or planning department if they have one
- State agencies that work in or have facilities in your county, especially the following:
  - Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (Penn DOT)
  - Pennsylvania State Police (PSP)
  - Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
  - Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
  - Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)
  - Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)

  Focus your invitation to the facility in your county vs the agency as a whole, for example Penn DOT District Office or PSP Troop.
- Adjacent counties, to include other state counties
- Up and down stream counties of larger rivers
- Railroads, pipelines, power lines, or other utilities that pass through county
- Large businesses
- Businesses with high hazard potential
- Representatives from federal facilities in your county (federal prisons, active duty military bases, and depots)
  - Commanders of local National Guard Armories or Military Reserve Centers
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Conservation district and private conservation organizations
- Chambers of commerce
- Volunteer disaster relief organizations such as the Red Cross
- Neighborhood groups and housing organizations
- Historical commissions and Historical preservation associations
- PEMA area office
- FEMA Region III Community Planners and HAZUS experts, particularly if they can participate virtually; include this contact on the CC line of invitations

2a. Build a Virtual Planning Place

Getting all these people to come to physical meetings can be very frustrating. Explore alternatives, including posting your plan update project on the county website, holding teleconferences, or setting up a bulletin board where people can read the plan, answer your questions, post comments, and conduct discussions. Announce your meetings on the internet using social media.

If you set up a website, please capture the number of 'hits' or otherwise track participation since FEMA will ask who was invited, the way they were invited, the number that responded and how each participated.

2b. Gather Planning Tools

Start with your existing plan and verify the following:

- Do you have the complete plan with all appendices and annexes in digital format that you can revise?

- How can you update the maps, charts, and tables in your plan?
  - Who completed the maps in the last HMP?
  - Will they provide the maps, charts, and tables in an editable format or are you stuck with pdf type files?
- What digital flood maps and analyses do you have access to?
  - Do you have your digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)?
  - Has FEMA completed a Risk MAP project in your county?
  - Have you had a Hazus analysis completed in your county?
- Do you have digital copies of other related county and state plans?
  - Comprehensive Plan or Land Use or Development Plans
  - Floodplain and zoning ordinances
  - Stormwater management plans or ordinances
  - Emergency Operations Plan
  - State HMP: http://www.pema.pa.gov/responseandrecovery/Disaster-Assistance/Documents/General%20Mitigation%20Forms%20and%20Information/Pennsylvania%20State%20Hazard%20Mitigation%20Plan%20-%20Oct%2031%202013.pdf
- Do you have a copy of county HMPs from adjacent and up and down stream counties?

Additionally, take the following steps:

- Begin to think about what has changed in your county since 2012 that might affect your HMP update.
- Obtain existing FEMA Local Mitigation Plan Review Tool.
- In addition to the PEMA SOG, please use the FEMA Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide checklist as you start your plan update. This is the standard against which your plan update will be reviewed. As you go through your plan update process, you should be recording where each checklist item is discussed or answered in your plan. When you turn in the plan update to PEMA/FEMA, it must be accompanied by a completed checklist.

3. Hold Planning Team Meetings

27 – 24 months before the current plan expires.

This is where you 'plan how are you are going to plan'. The planning team are the 4 – 12 people who will be doing most of the work and organizing the more public meetings. You will probably need 2 – 3 planning meetings to prepare for and follow up upon each public meeting.

4. Hold the Initial Kickoff Meeting

24 months before the current plan expires.

This is where you let the public know what you are doing. This should be a physical meeting but put all the information you can out on the web as well. The quality of your plan is directly related to how many stakeholders participate and we do not want to limit ourselves to only those who can make the meeting.

4a. Planning Process

At the kickoff meeting tell people what you are doing and why. Lay out the planning sequence and timeline. Assign tasks to people, especially in terms of updating information from the old plan and reviewing and updating hazards, capabilities, and mitigation actions. Make sure you keep a record of everyone who was invited, how

they were invited, whether or not they participated, and how they participated. This information will go in your plan and be checked by FEMA.

4b. Community Profile and Risk Assessment Changes

At the kickoff meeting discuss how has the county changed since the last plan. The last U.S. Census was in 2010; ensure that all of the Census information was incorporated in the 2012 plan. Also, consider the following with the participants:

- How has the population changed in five years?
- Catalogue all the new development – houses, stores, businesses, roads.
- Does your county have fracking or backen crude shipments?
- Are there any new factories?
- What happened in your county during DR 4099 (Hurricane Sandy) and DR 4149 (Summer Storms)?
- Have your FIRMS changed?
- What new data sets do we have that were not available in 2013?

5. Update the Community Profile

24 – 21 months before the current plan expires.

This is where you take all the information learned and integrate it into the current plan.

6. Update the Risk Assessment

21 – 18 months before the current plan expires.

This is the biggest and most time intensive part of your plan. Start with the following research and questions:

- Use your 2012 Hazard list as the base and update based on what you learned in the Community Profile and Capabilities section.
- Look at new hazards and how existing hazards have changed. Have you had any more hazard events in the last five years? Any damaging storms, accidents, or incidents?
- Does your new list include all of the hazards profiled in the current plan? If not, do you clearly articulate why for the FEMA reviewer?
- Take a look at the State list of hazards. You do not need to profile every single hazard that the state profiles. However, be sure that you clearly articulate why common or statewide hazards are not profiles in your plan.
- Redo the Hazard Prioritization. Has it changed since the last plan? Have any hazards become more or less important?

Look at how hazards might interact and make each other worse. For those of you with the capability (GIS expertise or money for contractors with GIS expertise) look at the following:

- Enhancing your HAZUS analysis.
- Can you add more detail and layers?
- Have you identified all the critical facilities within each hazard area? If so, can you move on to all health care facilities or residential facilities with at risk populations (elderly, those with disabilities, etc.)?
- Should you add structures of significant historical, cultural, or economic importance? Be sure to list any hazards that have occurred since the last plan.

Other considerations for updating the Risk Assessment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- More detailed information
- More accurate information
- Easier to use information – more MAPS!
- Enhanced Hazus
- Critical structures identified by category:
  - Hospital, Schools, Long term care
  - Fire stations, Utilities, Emergency Management, Prison/Law enforcement
  - Private vs public facilities
  - Infrastructure – roads, dams, levees, bridges, communications
  - Residential
  - Occupied/unoccupied – at risk occupants?
  - Economic importance
- Potential for secondary hazard – industrial plants with HAZMAT
- Dams and Levees
  - Address, owner, year built
  - Class, purpose
  - Length, width, height
  - Discharge and Storage
- Electric power generating stations
- Fuel storage, distribution
- Water wells, storage, distribution
- Rail, electric and pipe lines
- Baken crude hazard
- Climate change
- Flooding:
  - Do you have the latest FIRMs?
  - Has FEMA done a Risk MAP analysis for your county?
  - Do you have a Hazus level one analysis?
    - Can you enhance it by adding details of structures in the floodplain?
  - You will need to update your National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and Repetitive and Severe Repetitive Loss data. See PEMA HM for help getting the required information from FEMA.

7. Conduct the Capability Assessment

18 – 12 months before the current plan expires.

You need to include the codes, plans, and regulations from all municipalities and the county. Use the FEMA Local Mitigation Plan Review Checklist to make sure you are not missing anything in this section.

Other information to gather includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Contact Ernie Szabo to get NFIP data for Repetitive and Severe Repetitive Loss data.
- Identify the new plans the county has created.
  - Identify how these plans complement or contradict the HMP.

- Identify the potential shelters in the county, and information about them, including:
  - What is the capacity?
  - What is the power source?
    - Do they have back up electrical support?
  - Address, owner, and year built
  - First floor elevation, number of stories
  - Building footprint – feature type
  - Construction
  - Envelope – masonry, wood, reinforced concrete, steel
  - Foundation – basement, slab, pilings,
  - Endurance – how long can they last without resupply?
  - Access during emergency?

8. Update the Mitigation Strategy

12 – 9 months before the current plan expires.

While neither the biggest, nor the hardest, part of the plan, it is the most important. It is the *'so what?'* of your HMP.

- Review the priorities for mitigation actions?
  - Do these need to change?
  - Did the risk assessment priorities change and if so, do the mitigation priorities still match?
- Start with a review of the goals and objectives.
  - Do they need to change based on what you learned updating the Community Profile, Risk Assessment, and Capability Assessment?
- Have you conducted the annual reviews of the HMP?
  - If so, have you captured any accomplishments or progress on your existing mitigation actions?
- Review the current mitigation actions.
  - Have any been accomplished?
  - Do any need to be removed?
  - Do you need new mitigation actions to address the findings of the updated risk and capability assessments?
- Do you have at least one action for every municipality?
- Do you have at least one action to address every identified hazard?
- Do you have a mitigation action addressing the integration of the HMP with other jurisdictions and other types of plans?
- Have you integrated your mitigation actions with actions from other plans so that you can gain efficiencies or pool resources?

9. Update the Plan Maintenance Section

This section should change the least from last time. Review this with the FEMA checklist in hand to make sure it meets the requirements.

10. Draft the Plan

9 – 6 months before the current plan expires.

Incorporate all you have learned and then send out to your stakeholders for their comments. This will be the last time any of your municipalities or other stakeholders can input changes to the document. Once you finalize it, they cannot make changes.

11. Finalize the Plan

6 – 3 months before the current plan expires.

Integrate all the comments received on the draft. Ensure this copy does not say draft, or have any uncompleted sections.

12. Submit to PEMA and FEMA

3 months before the current plan expires.

Send the final copy to PEMA in digital form along with a checklist in Microsoft Word. Once PEMA has reviewed, they will send back an annotated checklist. On rare occasions, PEMA will require that the plan be revised before being sent to FEMA. PEMA will direct the county to update their checklist with any revisions made as directed by PEMA, and send one print and one digital copy of the HMP to FEMA.

FEMA always requires a few revisions and counties should allow 2-3 months for the FEMA review process. Once FEMA is satisfied with the plan content, they will send you an "Approval Pending Adoption" (APA) Letter. **This is not your approval document.**

13. Adopt the Plan

Once you have the APA letter, the county and municipalities can submit adoption resolutions to FEMA. There can be **no changes or revisions to the plan once FEMA has issued the APA letter**. Once FEMA receives the adoption resolutions, they will approve each individual municipal adoption. The first municipal approval will also trigger the approval letter for the whole county.