

San Bernardino County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan 2010 Update

Executive Summary



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Office of Emergency Services
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Overview

San Bernardino County Fire Department Office of Emergency Services (OES) is coordinating the update of the *San Bernardino County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan*. As required by the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS-FEMA), all Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMP) must be updated, adopted and approved every five (5) years; San Bernardino County's current HMP expired April 2010. The purpose of the update is to validate and incorporate new information into the plan and identify progress that has been made since the last approval of the plan. It should also be noted that an approved HMP is required to receive federal assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) or Pre Disaster Mitigation (PDM) programs.

The current *San Bernardino County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan* process consists of information from 55 local HMPs, which are included as an annex to the County's Operational Area plan. The 55 participants include all 24 incorporated cities and towns, 30 special districts, and the unincorporated county.

San Bernardino County Fire OES hired a contractor (ICF International) to support the County, Cities and Towns, and Special Districts to update the 55 local HMPs and the *San Bernardino County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan*. The ICF Team, which includes subcontractors MMI Engineering and Natural Hazards, offers experienced, field-tested Hazard Mitigation and planning professionals who have developed similar comprehensive HMPs. This support includes providing technical expertise, resource material and tools, not only to expedite the HMP update process, but also to ensure that the updates are in compliance with federal requirements of the program. The tools, resource material, and other project related information are being maintained on a project portal (<https://tmsprojects.icfi.com/sbhmpupdate/default.aspx>) to ensure the same information is available to all participants.

Background

The primary purpose of Mitigation Planning is to develop sustainable, self-reliant, disaster-resistant communities. Mitigation planning is the process of estimating the impact a natural, manmade, and/or a technological disaster may have on the urban (built) environment and identifying short-term and long-term actions that will result in the elimination and/or reduction of loss of life and property, environmental damage, and disruption of governmental, social, and economic activities.

The *Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act* (Stafford Act), as amended by the *Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000* (DMA 2000), switched the focus from hazard-specific Mitigation Plans to Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans in an effort to promote a more comprehensive, dynamic planning approach. Additionally, DMA 2000 encourages combining single jurisdictional planning efforts to create Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans.

Although the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans are intended to identify, assess, and mitigate community risk; the FEMA *Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Guidance* emphasizes that the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans should be more “performance standard” rather than “prescriptive”; meaning that the plans should identify “*what*” needs to be done rather than “*how*” it should be done.

Mitigation is perceived as local and only after local cities and towns, and special districts take ownership of the risk from natural and man-made hazards will the reduction of their impacts be truly achieved. That is why this project emphasizes working in support of the local cities/towns and special districts.

Project Overview and Process

The project approach includes four (4) major planning tasks: 1) Project Management; 2) Preparing for Updates; 3) Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates; and 4) Finalization of the County Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The Operational Area Stakeholders will utilize their 2005 HMP document and revise them where necessary. Tools and resource material will be developed along the way to assist the county, cities/towns, and special districts to understand the requirements and enable them to update their HMPs. The process consists of:

- Documenting actions since 2005;
- Incorporating new data;
- Engaging Planning Teams;
- Conducting Public Outreach; and
- Adoption of the Updated HMP.

Each Operational Area Stakeholder will establish a “*Planning Team*”. The “*Planning Team*” should include members in the community, both in the public and private sector, who have a vested interest in the completion of the HMP. The “*Planning Team*” should be large enough to provide a perspective but not too large as to hinder the process.

Meetings (both in-person and virtual) should be held with the “*Planning Team*” to solicit their input and review sections of the HMP. It is recommended that the meetings be focused on each section from the 2005 HMP, including the Introduction, Participation Information, Planning Process and Public Involvement, Risk Assessment, Mitigation Strategy, and Plan Maintenance.

The updated HMPs will be reviewed against a FEMA-designed Crosswalk. The Crosswalk links the federal requirement, the section in the HMP where the information can be found, and a rating as to the level of compliance with the regulation.

Once approved, a presentation of the County Operational Area Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan process and associated HMPs will be given to the County Disaster Council, and other groups as identified by County OES.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Operational Area Stakeholders:
 - Preparation of individual local HMPs
 - Public outreach
 - Coordination of Planning Teams
 - Approval of local HMP
- Planning Teams:
 - Assist and provide information pertaining to mitigation strategies and goals
- San Bernardino County Fire/Office of Emergency Services:
 - Preparation of Unincorporated County HMP
 - Preparation of Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard HMP Roll-Up
 - Contact/Liaison with Cal EMA and FEMA
 - Contractor oversight
- Cal EMA
 - Initial Feedback on level of compliance of HMP
- FEMA
 - Final approval determination of HMP

Project Timeline

In an effort to ensure that those participants who wish to submit proposals for next year's PDM funding cycle, two (2) separate HMP update tracks have been created. The first track is designed to have local HMPs approved prior to the PDM Project Submittal deadline of December 3, 2010. The second track is less aggressive, but still requires a dedicated and compressed effort for completion by the end of January 2011.