

Hazard Mitigation Strategy for Federal Disaster #1346: **2000 Detroit Area Urban Flooding**

The objective of mitigation is to reduce future disaster losses through acquisition and relocation of hazard-prone property, structural retrofitting, mitigation education of community officials and residents, wise land use and land development practices, prudent use of resources and funding, and encouragement of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) implementation and compliance, to name just a few measures that have been successful. To assist communities in Michigan with mitigative efforts, so that the environment is safer and has a reduced risk from disaster damage, the following objectives must be accomplished.

The initial mitigation opportunities and recommendations identified during the damage assessment process in many of the affected communities include the following:

- Apply the best methods to reduce or eliminate sewer backup incidents.
- Community outreach and education to promote flood proofing methods.
- Acquisition and relocation or retrofitting and flood proofing of substantially damaged structures located in flood prone areas.

Financial resources, including disaster assistance programs such as the HMGP, PAGP, and the funds from other state and federal programs, will be maximized:

- Under the Individual and Family Grant Program and Temporary Housing Minimal Repair Program, inspectors will make every effort to include mitigation measures in restoring damaged properties.
- Under the Small Business Administration, low interest loans can be acquired for repairs and mitigation upgrades to damaged structures.

Long term mitigation will be insured through comprehensive and prudent life saving measures, local building practices, and floodplain management.

The mitigation strategy for promoting and achieving mitigation of the hazards from this disaster will be focused in the following areas:

- Life safety measures.
- Community mitigation education and outreach.
- Coordination with the Individual and Family Grant Program and the Temporary Housing Minimal Repair Program.
- Community-administered flood proofing measures.
- Mitigation project development.
- National Flood Insurance Program mitigation opportunities and promotion.
- Promoting disaster resistant communities through Project Impact.

Life safety measures

- Assist community officials in identifying deficiencies in storm sewer design and develop solutions that will ensure public health and safety. The Michigan Hazard Mitigation Coordinating Council has a representative from the MDEQ. Issues pertaining to this disaster will be discussed by the MHMCC and suggestions taken from the MDEQ representative.

Community mitigation education and outreach

- Coordinate with public and private agencies in the development of flood resistant building practices.
- Two Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) have been opened for this disaster—one in Taylor and one in Dearborn. The DRCs are staffed by FEMA-trained Disaster Assistance Employees (DAEs) knowledgeable of the NFIP and mitigation of sewer backups.

Coordination with the Individual and Family Grant Program

- Coordinate with the Individual and Family Grant Program and the Temporary Housing Minimal Repair Program staff to ensure that appropriate flood proofing measures are allowed and specified for homes, businesses, and infrastructure being restored under these two programs.

Community-administered floodproofing measures

- Invite communities to establish and administer a locally-based floodproofing program that would provide public education on proper floodproofing techniques, and provide grants to individual home and business owners wishing to retrofit their structures to reduce flood damage. The program could be implemented and administered by an existing local department, such as the building, planning or public works department, which would be responsible for disbursing grants, monitoring work, providing technical assistance, and providing program status to the State.

- Flood proofing methods could include the following: installation of standpipes, sewer backflow (check) valves, or revised plumbing to include an ejector or sump pump for basements; raise electrical system components including service panels, meters, switches, and outlets that may easily be damaged by floodwaters; raise or relocate HVAC equipment, water heater, and washer/dryer.

Mitigation project development

- Information from the Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) will be used to help identify the communities that should be contacted concerning the possibility of mitigation opportunities under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); and other state and federal programs.
- Review the potentially damaged structure inventory from the PDA, concentrating primarily on structures that may have been substantially damaged.
- Review the NFIP State Coordinator's information concerning the flood hazard identification and participation status of communities in the NFIP.
- Coordinate with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, the Michigan Department of Career Development, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority, and other appropriate state agencies concerning communities with a substantial investment of state financial resources.
- Whenever possible, incorporate mitigation projects into larger, ongoing or planned community projects (as long as the larger project will be completed in a timely manner and mitigation benefits can be fully retained) (on-going).
- Upon identification of communities suitable for mitigation, local officials will be contacted to determine the level of local interest in partnering towards recovery that will reduce the communities risk to future severe storms and flooding. The Mitigation Team will be activated and conduct site visits with communities, as necessary, to gain commitment in developing projects and implementing appropriate mitigation measures. The Mitigation Team will function as a technical resource to the community to help identify problems that should be addressed by the mitigation measure and identify financial assistance opportunities through federal, state and private sectors programs.
- If a mitigation component is established within the Disaster Field Office (DFO), and MSP/EMHSD will supply staff, as appropriate, to support the DFO mitigation efforts.
- The Mitigation Team will evaluate the mitigation projects proposed within Michigan and select those projects that will be funded under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

NFIP mitigation opportunities and promotion

- MDEQ staff will provide technical assistance to local floodplain administrators as needed (on-going).
- MDEQ staff will, as needed, conduct NFIP briefings to inform local floodplain administrators of NFIP responsibilities (on-going).
- FEMA has ordered three sets of NFIP maps for the declared area.
- FEMA will mail letters to affected communities regarding immediate substantial damage determinations (not applicable for this disaster).
- FEMA will identify priorities for possible enforcement actions (on-going).
- MDEQ, MSP/EMHSD, and FEMA will review repetitive loss data for potential acquisition, elevation or flood proofing sites.

The NFIP State Coordinator has indicated that the Village of Lake Angelus in Oakland County is the only NFIP sanctioned community in the two-county disaster area.