



The Pre-Disaster Mitigation Planning Process

Houston County and the Cities of Centerville, Perry and Warner Robins have received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for Houston County. Mitigation is defined as any action that reduces or eliminates the effects of future disasters on the community. Mitigation is most effective when based on an inclusive, comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster actually occurs.

The Houston County Emergency Management Agency (HEMA) is in the process of creating a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The City of Perry is working alongside HEMA to develop this plan to address natural and manmade hazards within Houston County. This plan must be submitted to FEMA, according to the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

The Middle Georgia RDC is assisting HEMA by facilitating this planning process. Additionally, a committee made up of representatives from both the public and private sectors has been formed to develop this Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for Houston County. The planning process consists of creating an inventory of critical facilities, identifying vulnerable populations within the County, recognizing potential hazards, assessing the County's vulnerability to specific hazards, and estimating potential losses to the community.

The plan will ultimately seek to develop mitigation goals and objectives that will strive to protect lives and property, reduce the costs of disaster response, and minimize disruption to the community following a disaster.

This committee, in the near future, will be developing this list of goals and strategies that will be used to take steps toward "disaster-proofing" Houston County. While no community can eliminate damage from all disasters, measures can be taken to lessen the effects of disasters before they strike.

Later this year, this Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan must be submitted to FEMA for its approval. Prior to that time, this list of goals and strategies must be further developed with priorities and timelines established. If you have any suggested actions that can be taken to further "disaster-proof" Houston County, please pass these along so they can be considered in the planning process.

Your input in this planning process is welcome and desired. If you have knowledge or ideas for any project, please contact the Middle Georgia RDC via email to: rhaygood@mgrdc.org or call Rusty Haygood at (478) 751-6160.