

State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan (SOHMP) identifies how Ohio has successfully implemented many hazard mitigation programs to the state's resilience in the face of future disasters, and identifies work remaining to be done. An overall purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for actions by state agencies, local governments, business and industry, and citizens to ensure that adequate mitigation planning activities are being completed, that hazard mitigation actions are based on factual, scientific information, and that mitigation actions are not only appropriate for the particular situation, but are also wise investments of taxpayer funds.

As the state grows and changes, it faces the challenges of addressing vulnerabilities in the built and the yet to be built environment. Ohio, like all other states, faces numerous hazards -- both natural and manmade -- and these hazards can result in disasters that impact citizens, businesses, and all levels of government. By identifying hazards and taking appropriate steps to mitigate future vulnerabilities, growth and change can not only occur, it can thrive and be resilient when future hazard events occur.

The State of Ohio Hazard Mitigation Plan is the official statement of Ohio's statewide hazard mitigation goals, strategies, and priorities. Hazard mitigation can be defined as any action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property by natural and human-caused disasters. Hazard mitigation planning is a dynamic process built on realistic assessments of hazards, coupled with effective strategies for investing in preventive measures. It involves multiple stakeholders from throughout the state and community, blending public and private sector goals, objectives, and actions.

The goals of this plan are to significantly reduce life loss and injuries and minimize damage to structures and property from disasters, reduce societal disruptions, better integrate hazard mitigation programs and policies, reduce the number of repetitive flood loss structures, and to promote education and outreach activities to create a culture of hazard mitigation in Ohio.

This plan is required under federal law and must be updated every three years. It is required to ensure that the state and all Ohio communities remain eligible to receive federal public assistance and hazard mitigation grant funds. The current plan was approved by FEMA as a Standard Plan in January 2005 and later upgraded to an Enhanced Plan in May 2005. This update is for a Standard Plan. The Ohio Emergency Management Agency (Ohio EMA) intends to submit an Enhanced Plan upgrade to FEMA later in 2008, to qualify Ohio for additional federal hazard mitigation grant funds (15% for standard vs. 20% for enhanced).

The 2008 update addresses a range of new conditions, laws, and programs that have emerged since the current plan was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in May 2005. It consists of four sections and includes elements from the 2005 plan. It also includes a status report on mitigation actions identified in the 2005 plan. The most significant change in the 2008 update is the inclusion of 8

additional hazard profiles, bringing the total number of hazards profiled to 13. Also, the 2008 update uses exciting new tools to estimate vulnerability like HAZUS – a risk analysis program made available by FEMA.

Section 1, Introduction, summarizes the plan, describes the planning process, describes the integration of the plan into other state planning initiatives, outlines how the plan will be evaluated and updated.

Section 2, Statewide Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, & Vulnerability Analysis is the scientific underpinning of the plan. This section profiles 13 hazards that are present in Ohio (hazard history, determination of risk and vulnerability of buildings and infrastructure) and includes a brief discussion of development trends and consequence analysis.

Section 3, State Mitigation Strategy, presents hazard mitigation goals, objectives, and action items to be effective in hazard mitigation.

Section 4, Local Mitigation Program Coordination discusses the status of local hazard mitigation planning efforts, using information and analysis gained from a review of 92 LHMPs, identifies areas of deficiency, discusses how LHMPs can be more effective, identifies present and potential sources of funding for LHMP activities, and recommends ways to better link the local LHMPs with state efforts.

Finally an **Appendix** contains additional information that supports the content of the state plan.