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MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Region IV Risk MAP  
Increasing Resilience Together

# eSpotlight

QUARTERLY PROGRAM UPDATES

July - September 2018

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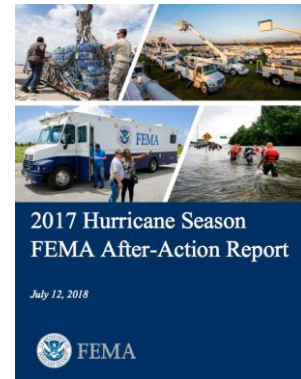
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## Prepare for the 2018 Hurricane Season

The 2017 hurricane season season taught many Americans an important lesson in emergency preparedness – mitigate against your vulnerabilities before a storm arrives.

Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria caused catastrophic damage to many American states and territories, costing the United States \$200 billion in damages and \$9.6 billion in National Flood Insurance Program pay-outs.

The approaching 2018 hurricane season is a timely reminder for communities to evaluate and mitigate their vulnerabilities. Take time to review your community’s emergency preparedness protocols, evacuation plans, hazard mitigation plan, and other community plans that play in role in helping citizens recover after a disaster.



No matter how many storms are predicted, all it takes is one storm to strike and cause devastating damage. How much damage will the storm cause? How intense will the storm be? Where will the storm hit? These uncertainties are why we make hazard mitigation and family preparedness plans in advance.

Here are a few questions to help incite conversations about how your community is preparing for this year’s hurricane season:

- What areas in your communities are prone to flooding that have not been mitigated?
- What preventive steps could divert the flow of excess water from intense rain?
- Are power lines vulnerable to threatening trees?
- Is there an emergency communication system in place for each level of government?
- Do critical facilities in your community have emergency generators?
- Does your community have a supply of backup generators?
- Does your community have potable water for 72 hours to for vulnerable populations?
- Are your emergency shelters at the ready for an unexpected devastating storm?
- What emergency transportation is available to vulnerable populations?

Don’t wait to protect yourself, local community members, and property from storm damage. Start planning now to increase your opportunities to recover after a storm.

## New Hazard Mitigation Planning Resources

Region IV recently developed two new mitigation planning resources in coordination with Resilience Action Partners, the CERC Contractor.

The documents are intended for planners at all levels to help them visualize and better communicate the value, benefit, and importance of mitigation planning. Both resources are available in the [“Discovery” Best Practices folder of the Region IV SharePoint Site](#).

[FEMA Region IV Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning Process](#) graphic explains the key steps in the planning process and conveys the continuous nature of mitigation planning. The graphic includes maintenance activities that should occur during years 1-4 between major updates/FEMA approvals.

[Benefits of Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning](#) is a non-technical 5-page document that explains the benefits and objectives of a FEMA-approved mitigation plan, describes the diverse types of action plans can include, and references commonly utilized FEMA mitigation planning resources.

Please download and share these documents with communities, planning partners, or add them to your library of existing outreach or technical assistance materials.

For more information, contact Lillian Huffman, Region IV Acting Planning Lead at [lillian.huffman@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:lillian.huffman@fema.dhs.gov) or any member of the FEMA Region IV Planning Team.

## Local Residents Get IMMERSED at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Savannah Hurricane Preparedness Expo

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Savannah Hurricane Preparedness Expo took place on June 9 in Savannah, GA and featured a successful showcase of FEMA’s IMMERSED virtual reality experience. The event, presented by the Insurance Commissioner Ralph Hudgens, is an annual free educational expo with more than 35 exhibitors to assist local residents in preparing for hurricane season.

The *Resilience Action Partners* team deployed IMMERSED at the Savannah Hurricane Expo in partnership with FEMA RIV Cooperating Technical Partner (CTP), the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and a variety of other insurance, disaster relief, media, and community organizations.

Other exhibitors who attended the event included: The Georgia Office of Insurance Commissioner, Chatham County Emergency Management Agency, Home Depot, Chatham County Fire Department, Salvation Army, American Red Cross, Nationwide, Allstate, State Farm, GEICO, Georgia Power, Georgia State Patrol, Travelers, I Heart Radio, ABC 22 (WJCL), and many more.

Throughout the duration of the four-hour expo, community members stopped by the booth to experience IMMERSED and discuss their personal experiences with flooding.

"I'm building a house right now, so this makes me more conscious of where water drainage and other flood issues will happen around my home," said one long-time homeowner in response to his IMMERSED experience.

"I've lived in Savannah for many years, but grew up in North Dakota," said one resident. "During the 12 years I lived there, we had several 100-year and 500-year floods. After surviving that, I've learned to take flooding issues seriously."

"I love that this helps teach people what questions to ask during and after the home buying process," said one local homeowner who also works as an insurance agent. "If you know you don't have certain things implemented to protect yourself, you can go to your community more informed about what to inquire about and how to prepare."

In addition to IMMERSED, there were several other attractions featured at the expo. Nationwide showcased its NASCAR No. 88 Chevy Cup Car and simulator; Chatham County landed its 500e emergency response helicopter in the event space after attendees arrived; and the Insurance Commissioner hosted seminars and raffles throughout the event.



The Savannah Hurricane Expo was both a fun-filled family event and an excellent opportunity to proactively discuss flood risks. Most importantly, local residents walked away from their IMMERSED experience feeling inspired to take action to protect their families and property during this year's hurricane season.

## National Flood Insurance Program Updates



The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) continues to develop and share innovative products to raise awareness

about hurricane preparedness, the devastating impact of hurricane-related flooding, and the importance of purchasing flood insurance to protect homes and lives.

Below are a few that may benefit your community.

### [Hurricane Season Agent Toolkit:](#)

Talking points, marketing templates, and social media resources to help insurance agents market flood insurance during the 2018 hurricane season.

<https://agents.floodsmart.gov/>

### [Hurricane Season Social Graphics:](#)

The graphics and GIFs within this collection can be used on social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) to promote preparedness for flood and hurricane season.

### [Why do I need to rethink insurance?](#)

Video promoting the importance and value of flood insurance.

### [What factors determine how much I pay for flood insurance?](#)

Video discussing how flood insurance rates are determined.

### [How can I buy flood insurance?](#)

Video discussing how to find and purchase flood insurance.

## FEMA Region IV Hosts Inaugural Insurance Commissioners' Roundtable in Atlanta

The FEMA Region IV Mitigation Division recently coordinated an exciting opportunity for collaboration among State partners working with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) at its Inaugural Insurance Commissioners' Roundtable event that took place on July 19, 2018 at the DoubleTree Northlake Hotel in Atlanta, Ga.

The Roundtable sparked strategic level conversations about the intersections of State agencies in risk reduction and emergency management through floodplain management and flood insurance.

Participants included State Emergency Management Directors, State Insurance Commissioners, State NFIP Coordinators, State Hazard Mitigation Officers, FEMA Senior Leaders, and the Region IV Mitigation Division staff.



Motivated by a united interest to promote awareness of flood hazards, as well as develop viable ways to partner in developing effective strategies to reduce flood risk to life and property, the Roundtable provided an active forum to:

- Build relationships across state and federal partners in risk reduction;
- Highlight successes in partnership towards risk reduction;
- Promote the value of flood insurance;
- Identify strategies or resources needed to implement risk reduction priorities;
- Educate partners on what to expect following a large disaster event;
- Explore ways to better facilitate recovery needs.

Event attendees also had an opportunity to experience IMMersed, FEMA's virtual reality showcase that puts users in command of a real-world flooding scenario.

The FEMA RIV Mitigation Division appreciates all of the participants who attended this year's Roundtable event and looks forward to participating in future collaboration and discussion opportunities with its partners.

## Community Rating System Updates

Some new and updated guidance documents have been recently added to the CRS Resources website. Below is a summary of two important resources:

### **CRS Credit for Drainage System Maintenance**

This booklet provides communities details on necessary steps to ensure that programs for keeping debris out of their natural streams and detention/retention basins earn CRS credit.

### **Impact Adjustment Maps**

This resource has step-by-step instructions for five types of impact adjustment maps that may be needed for CRS purposes. Readers can pick the appropriate instructions that apply to their particular community needs: a base map, a map depicting an open space impact adjustment, a map showing an impact adjustment based on buildings, a map based on watershed area, or a map based on other areas.

To explore both documents in full, please visit: <https://crsresources.org/>

## Best Practice Highlight: Escambia County

*Hospital prepares to Handle Day-to-Day Operations during Power Outages*

**PENSACOLA, FL.** – When Hurricane Ivan barreled down on the Gulf Coast in September 2004, the storm knocked out Sacred Heart Hospital's electricity located in Pensacola. Forced to rely on emergency generators, the hospital's capacity was not sufficient to supply the entire building with air conditioning. The hospital remained functional but at reduced capacity.

Sacred Heart, a renowned cardiovascular hospital, is a 566-bed critical facility that includes the region's only Children's Hospital, a Level II Trauma Center, a Cancer Center affiliated with MD Anderson Cancer Network and a Heart and Vascular Institute that offers life support systems.

"We were able to maintain all the hospital's essential functions during the storm... but the backup generators were not big enough to cool the entire hospital," said Mike Burke, public relations manager. According to Burke, the hospital was in a critical state for about 36 to 48 hours and the cellular communication system was also challenged.

"Hurricane Ivan highlighted some areas of potential risks," said Becky Washler, Sacred Heart Hospital's senior planner. "We realized that we needed more emergency generators to keep other areas of the facility fully operational, not only critical care areas and life safety equipment. Having additional patient areas fully operational during an outage will allow the hospital to better respond to community medical needs during a disaster."

To read more about this best practice, click [HERE](#) to access the full story on FEMA's website.

## Best Practices Show Smart Planning Saves Lives

*The devastating hurricanes of 2017 highlighted two important planning needs for communities that translate into saving lives – mitigating to protect against power outages for critical facilities and stricter building codes contribute to saving life and property.*

### Highlight on Collier County

*Adhering to Codes during Construction: A Plus for Aspiring Homeowners*

**NAPLES, FL** – Habitat for Humanity applied several mitigation strategies in Collier County by building affordable, structurally sound, homes with a low flood risk. An international non-governmental and nonprofit organization, Habitat for Humanity works in more than 1,300 communities across the United States.

"We build homes that are affordable and have structural integrity," said Nicholas Kouloheras, president of Habitat for Humanity in Collier County. "However, buying land to build the homes is a huge challenge. The majority of the property purchased is in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)."

Infrastructure preparation and home construction are well executed and adhere to Collier County's stringent building codes. Most of the undeveloped property in Collier County is farmland or reclaimed wetlands abutting the Everglades. The Habitat for Humanity subdivisions are 10 to 50 acres or larger and are developed as independent subdivisions.



"Looking at raw land, we do aerial photography, review the flood map, research zoning regulations, discuss entitlements and have an ecologist check the wetlands for endangered plants and animals," said Chris Hagan, a civil engineer. "We also keep in mind flood routing and storm-water management."

Hagan added that Collier County is more stringent with permit requirements than some other counties in Florida. "But this provides better protection," Hagan said. A storm-water management system to increase capacity, delivery and reduce damage risk from flooding is constructed in each housing community.

"We create lakes (detention ponds) which are approximately 20 percent of the subdivision. Each lake is about an acre and has a control structure," said Hagan. "The water is treated on site before finding its way into the Gulf of Mexico."

"Habitat doesn't get any breaks. All homes are required to be constructed at Base Flood Elevation (BFE). Habitat homes are built three to six inches above the BFE. Finished floor elevations are set above the BFE and designed to be above the 100-year zero-discharge storm elevations. All roads are above the 25-year flood," Hagan added. Homeowners who elevate their homes are assured insurance savings.

To read more about this best practice, click [HERE](#) to access the full story on FEMA's website.

## Upcoming State Conferences

### 2018 Kentucky Association of Mitigation Managers

September 18 – 20, 2018  
Lake Barkley State Resort Park,  
Cadiz

To register, visit:

[www.kymitigation.org/2018-kamm-conference/](http://www.kymitigation.org/2018-kamm-conference/)

### Alabama Association of Floodplain Managers Fall Conference

October 22-24, 2018  
Orange Beach, AL

To register, visit:

[http://www.aafmfloods.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=87&club\\_id=146785&item\\_id=854259](http://www.aafmfloods.org/content.aspx?page_id=87&club_id=146785&item_id=854259)

### North Carolina Association of Floodplain Managers Fall Floodplain Institute

October 16-19, 2018  
Asheville, NC

To register, visit:

<http://www.ncafpm.org/FFI.html>

## Upcoming Training and Webinars

At CRSresources.org

August 21 – Introduction to CRS  
August 22 – Flood Insurance Promotion (Activity 370)  
September 18 – Preparing an Annual Recertification  
September 19 – Repetitive Loss Properties and the CRS

To sign up for trainings, visit: <http://crsresources.org/training/>

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At Coast.NOAA.gov

Digital Coast Academy offers a wide range of learning resources and self-guided courses.

August 22, 2 – 5 p.m. EST – OpenNSPECT  
September 11, 2 – 3:30 p.m. EST – Seven Best Practices for Risk Communication

For other training opportunities from NOAA, visit:

<https://www.coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training>

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At Planning.org

The successful Planning Information Exchange (PIE) webinar series revolves around four central themes, including all hazards, and mitigation planning and its connections with recovery planning and preparedness.

To sign up for trainings, visit:

<https://www.planning.org/nationalcenters/hazards/planninginformationexchange/>

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At ESRI.org

Geographic information systems (GIS) lets us visualize, question, analyze, and interpret data to understand relationships, patterns, and trends. Just getting started with ArcGIS or are looking to improve your skills?

Check out the free on-demand and web-based courses at:

<http://www.esri.com/training>

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At EMI – The National Emergency Training Center

Anyone interested in enrolling can send an email to [NFIPCRS@iso.com](mailto:NFIPCRS@iso.com) to request registration details.

For tips on completing a successful application:

<http://training.fema.gov/apply/emiapptips.pdf?v=2016-02-12>

For wide range of campus classes and course:

<http://www.training.fema.gov/emicourses>

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