

# CLINTON COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN



PREPARED FOR

CLINTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES  
22 CREE DRIVE  
LOCK HAVEN, PA 17745

PREPARED BY  
THE CLINTON COUNTY  
HAZARD MITIGATION TEAM

## ***Executive Summary***

In June of 2004 Clinton County established a Hazard Mitigation Team comprised of various county officials. The purpose of this team was to create a Hazard Mitigation Plan that will benefit Clinton County and its local levels of government. This plan will be a guide for communities in Clinton County to become more disaster resistant, thus making the residents, businesses and communities less susceptible to future exposure to disastrous events. In hazard mitigation planning, a key component is to have a clear understanding of what risks are out there in our communities and what steps can be taken to prevent or lessen the impact of those risks. The development of a Hazard Mitigation Plan is an important first step in the process as it provides a beginning point of the process of assessing potential hazards and identifying cost effective efforts that will help reduce or even possibly eliminate the damaging impacts of a given hazard. Successful completion of a Hazard Mitigation Plan will enable Clinton County and its twenty-nine (29) municipalities to be eligible for future hazard mitigation grant funding as well as provide each jurisdiction with an understanding of its vulnerability to the hazards and a plan for mitigating the effects of those hazards.

Working as a team we have identified a number of natural hazards we feel Clinton County is most susceptible to. Additionally, we have evaluated the severity, frequency and monetary impact these hazards would have on our communities. The natural hazards evaluated in our plan include:

- Floods
- Dam Failure
- Landslides
- Blizzards / Winter Storms
- Severe Thunderstorms

By far, flooding is the most common natural hazard with the greatest potential for significant human and financial impact upon Clinton County. Based on a 100-year flood

it is estimated that such a flooding event would cause \$62,000,000.00 in damages. However, other hazards such as those listed above are also capable of resulting in significant financial losses. Along with the financial impact some loss of life and other irreplaceable impacts would also be realized as a result of these identified hazards.

The Hazard Mitigation Team has identified and prioritized project planning goals following the completion of a hazard vulnerability assessment. The identification project planning goals are based on the findings of the hazard vulnerability assessment and are focused on Clinton County's vulnerability to the profiled natural hazard events and the potential severity of those hazard events. As such, these goals represent Clinton County's vision to minimize damages caused by flooding and other natural hazards.

- Ensure existing drainage systems (pipes, culverts, and channels) are adequate and functioning properly.
- Ensure local building codes / ordinances are consistent with PEMA and PA DCED guidelines and are properly enforced.
- Preserve areas where natural hazard potential is high.
- Provide residents with adequate warning of potential floods and other meteorological events.
- Ensure emergency response services and critical facilities / functions are not interrupted by natural hazards.
- Provide safe and efficient evacuation routes during floods and other natural disasters.
- Provide adequate shelters during hazard events.
- Ensure all residents and business owners are aware of the potential hazards associated with their environment and the ways they can protect themselves.
- Ensure local officials are well trained regarding natural hazards and appropriate prevention and mitigation techniques.
- Develop citizen information on natural, technological, and man-made disaster response.

- Provide adequate communication systems for emergency management agencies and emergency response units.
- Increase the length of stream reaches mapped on FIRM maps and /or improve the accuracy and density of flood elevation data in areas where this mapping would be beneficial.

The next section of the plan is an evaluation of the capability of Clinton County and its twenty nine (29) municipalities to identify and address hazards. This capability assessment contains an evaluation of the institutional, legal, fiscal, political and technical abilities of the County and its municipalities.

The plan takes a multi-faceted approach to hazard prevention and mitigation. The plan's hazard mitigation strategy includes items in a number of specific categories:

- Preventative measures (ordinances, additional planning, building codes, operation and maintenance activities, public education);
- Emergency services (hazard warning enhancements, emergency response improvements);
- Property protection (structure relocation / acquisition, elevation, flood proofing, insurance, and emergency response planning);
- Structural projects (dams, levees / floodwalls, bridge / culvert modifications, and landslide abatement);
- Natural resource protection (open space preservation, wetland protection, identification and implementation of best management practices, and water resource management planning); and
- Public information (map information, library resources, outreach efforts, environmental education).

It is important to note the action items contained in the plan are expected to be implemented in voluntary cooperation with property owners. Adopting the plan does not force a municipality to take any specific action, but rather helps protect their residents,

minimize future damages and helps maintain their eligibility for hazard mitigation funding. There is a chapter of the plan that contains guidance for implementing and maintaining the plan over time, including annual opportunities for amending or revising the plans contents.