

BERKS COUNTY HAZARD VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE 2018

The format of the Berks County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated per the new Pennsylvania Standard Operating Guide (SOG). This included the addition of three new sections (2, 3 & 8) and merging of two sections (Hazard Mitigation Goals and Hazard Mitigation Strategies).

1. INTRODUCTION

This section was reorganized per the SOG. Planning process information was moved to Section 3 and plan adoption information was moved to Section 8.

2. COMMUNITY PROFILE

This is a new section added to comply with the SOG requirements. It contains a community profile of Berks County including a brief overview of the geography, environment, community facts, population, demographics, land use and development.

3. PLANNING PROCESS

The information in this section previously existed in the Introduction of the 2013 plan and is now a standalone section per the SOG requirements.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

The following information was updated or added:

- Disaster History updated
- NFIP status and claims data updated
- Hazard event profiles updated
- Future occurrences added to hazard event profiles
- New hazard event profile for technological hazards and cyber security/attacks added
- Vulnerable structures updated
- Ranking results added
- Hazus Risk Assessment updated
- Future development and vulnerability – Preservation priority areas mapping added

5. CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

No changes to this section (previously Section 4 of 2013 plan).

6. MITIGATION

One goal was reprioritized:

1. Ensure that emergency communications systems are available and adequate at all levels throughout the County. The priority level of this goal was changed from “high” to “moderate”.

Three new goals were added:

1. Encourage and assist municipalities and emergency services organizations to equip and train for high probability hazard events. (High Priority)
2. Ensure the maintenance of healthcare and/or public health infrastructure. (High Priority)
3. Coordinate existing and new plans across and among major employers, industries and institutions such as colleges/universities and hospitals. (Moderate priority)

New mitigation measures were added:

- Preventive Measures:
 1. Identify local drought indicators and establish a regular schedule to monitor and report conditions.
 2. Develop agreements for secondary water sources that may be used during drought conditions.
 3. Require municipalities to adopt updates to UCCs.
- Emergency Services:
 1. Ensure vulnerable populations are adequately protected from the impacts of extreme temperatures such as organizing outreach to vulnerable populations, including establishing and promoting accessible heating and cooling centers in the community.
 2. Adopt a post disaster recovery ordinance based on a plan to regulate repair activity, generally depending on property location.
 3. Incorporate procedures for tracking high water marks following a flood into emergency response plans.
 4. Maintain and promote the County's Smart911 service that allows residents to create a safety profile for their households that they desire 9-1-1 and first responders to have in the event of an emergency.
- Property protection
 1. Remove existing buildings and infrastructure from erosion hazard areas, landslide hazard areas and subsidence hazard areas.
 2. Stabilize erosion hazard areas by preventing erosion with proper bank stabilization, sloping or grading techniques, planting vegetation on slopes, terracing hillsides, or installing riprap boulders or geotextile fabric when updating or replacing foundations.
 3. Encourage or consider retrofitting buildings to minimize hail damage as normal routine maintenance:
 - Structural bracing, shutters, laminated glass in window panes, and hail-resistant roof coverings or flashing in building design;
 - Improve roof sheathing;
 - Installing hail-resistant roofing and siding
 4. Install and maintain appropriate protection to critical electronic equipment from damage resulting from fluctuations in the power grid.
 5. Conduct regular maintenance for drainage systems and flood control systems.
- Structural Projects
 1. Recommend Boyertown Borough seek grant opportunities for spillway improvements of the Trout Run Dam. The spillway is considered to be inadequate, according to PA DEP Dam Safety, and is capable of passing only 59% of the required spillway design.

- Natural Resources Protection
 1. Stabilize erosion hazard areas.
- Public Information
 1. Educate farmers about the various soil conservation programs available in the county.
 2. Increase hazard education and risk awareness in general for the hazards that occur in Berks County.
 3. Encourage municipal participation in the hazard mitigation planning process.
 4. Berks County DES to incorporate hazard mitigation training during its January coordination meetings with stakeholders.

7. PLAN MAINTENANCE

No changes to this section (Previously Section 6 of 2013 plan).

8. PLAN ADOPTION

The information in this section previously existed in the Introduction of the 2013 plan and is now a standalone section per the SOG requirements.