

ADAMS COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN (2020 UPDATE)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Adams County Hazard Mitigation Plan* of 2020 is an update to the *Adams County 2015 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update*. The Adams County Department of Emergency Services (ACDES) updated the plan utilizing a planning committee with representatives from the local governments, private businesses, and community organizations throughout 2019 and 2020. The first version of this plan is from 2005.

This plan considers all the jurisdictions – county, boroughs, and townships – within the geographical boundaries of Adams County, Pennsylvania, and is therefore considered a multi-jurisdictional plan. The plan has been prepared in accordance with federal requirements outlined in the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA, 2K) which requires counties to formulate a hazard mitigation plan in order to be eligible for mitigation funds made available by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Act requires that all states and local jurisdictions develop and submit mitigation plans designed to meet the criteria outlined in 44 CFR Parts 201 and 206. This plan has been approved by the committee who developed it, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Procedurally, the ACDES convened a planning committee five times and a “historical/cultural subcommittee” once. These meetings were information-sharing as well as content-generation events. The county’s consultant ran the meetings and compiled minutes to document decisions made. Though there was no attendance at a public meeting scheduled during the update, there was substantial public participation through an online survey. One hundred fifty (150) individuals completed the survey. The public felt most concerned about “Tornado & Wind Storm” and “Transportation Accident,” with 73 and 71 respondents reporting feeling concerned or very concerned about those hazards. Seventy (70) respondents were either concerned or very concerned about hazardous materials releases. Respondents were least concerned with earthquakes and dam failures.

When asked about mitigation actions they have undertaken in the past, 117 respondents (88%) reported maintaining trees on their property, 67% had repaired or replaced their roof, and 56% had cleared underbrush. They also showed support for planting trees to promote a cooler micro-climate (72% or 102 individuals), and burying power lines to provide for uninterrupted power during severe weather (64% or 90 individuals). The least amount of support was shown



for buying out properties, relocating homes, and elevating structures prone to flooding (11% or 16 individuals).

Individuals were given an opportunity to comment on locations throughout the county where hazard incidents have occurred. Four individuals chose to identify hazard locations. One location was Mount Joy, at the intersection of S. Peelman-Klinger Road, King Road, and Hoffman Home Road. The other three locations were in Fairfield Borough: one at the intersection of Main Street and Carrolls Tract Road, one on a property along Third Street, and one along Main Street.

Though there were minor changes throughout the plan, the major changes to the 2020 version were minimal. The committee added one hazard, landslide, bringing the total hazards in the plan to 18. Section 4.4 summarizes risk and vulnerability to the hazards in the plan. The following table presents that summary.

HAZARD RANKING RESULTS								
<i>Hazard</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Onset</i>	<i>Magnitude</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Human</i>	<i>Property</i>	<i>Ranking</i>
Nuclear Incidents	2	5	4	3	3	1	3	21
Flood, Flash Flood, Ice Jam	5	3	4	2	2	1	2	19
Winter Storm	5	3	1	4	2	1	1	17
Env. Haz.: Hazardous Materials Release	5	2	5	1	1	2	1	17
Invasive Species	2	1	1	3	4	2	3	16
Pandemic and Infectious Disease	5	3	1	1	2	3	1	16
Transportation Accidents	5	1	5	1	1	2	1	16
Hurricane, Tropical Storm, Nor'easter	2	3	1	5	1	1	2	15
Extreme Temperature	3	1	1	5	1	3	1	15
Wildfire	5	2	4	1	1	1	1	15
Tornado, Wind Storm	3	2	4	1	1	2	1	14
Terrorism	1	2	4	1	1	4	1	14
Drought	2	3	1	5	1	1	1	14



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Hailstorm	4	2	2	2	1	1	1	13
Dam Failure	1	3	3	1	1	2	1	12
Subsidence, Sinkhole	5	1	1	2	1	1	1	12
Earthquake	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	11
Landslide	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	8

The committee discussed and redefined the goals that this plan will strive to achieve through the implementation of hazard mitigation strategies or projects. The previous version of this plan identified four goals with associated objectives. The committee recognized those original goals contained similar wording and many focused on individual hazards. To better represent a cohesive effort, the committee generated a list of new goals, consolidated aspects of the 2015 goals into those new items, and used the new goals to guide actions across the entire plan update (rather than just project generation). The 2020 goals list is as follows.

- **Goal 1:** Reduce potential injury/death and damage to existing community assets and critical infrastructure (i.e., bridges, water, sewer, natural gas, electricity, communications, etc.) from all hazards that could impact the county.
- **Goal 2:** Realize hazard mitigation opportunities through stormwater management and source water protection initiatives.
- **Goal 3:** Promote disaster resilience in future development through code enforcement.
- **Goal 4:** Reduce losses by facilitating a more efficient response to identified hazards.

Adams County’s committee also updated the plan maintenance process by requesting the Adams County Council of Governments (COG) to establish a standing hazard mitigation agenda item to allow for mitigation discussions at each COG meeting. This regular process ensures local officials capture lessons learned from actual incidents soon after they occur. Since hazard mitigation is not a topic that jurisdictional elected officials regularly encounter, the planning committee identified guideposts for the COG to consider annually. Those guideposts are as follows.

- **Year 1:** Ensure countywide adoption of the plan
- **Year 2:** Focus on hazard identification and risk analysis; evaluate how well the plan predicted impacted areas
- **Year 3:** The ACDES will engage with the public via an online survey



- **Year 4:** Update project implementation
- **Year 5:** Coordinate the next formal update of the plan

This plan will serve as a vehicle for ensuring eligibility for hazard mitigation funding for participating jurisdictions throughout the next five years. Moving forward, the participatory processes set as a foundation in 2020 will enable a similarly-engaged process in 2025, and through annual plan review, perhaps result in a richer discussion of risk, vulnerability, and mitigation project status.

