



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

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### MEMORANDUM

**To:** Local Administrators and Planners and Regional Planning agencies

**From:** Michelle Pope  
Acting State Hazard Mitigation Officer

**Date:** November 12, 2003

**Re:** Mitigation Planning Guidance #2:  
Funding Affected by Local Hazard Mitigation Planning

Local governments must obtain federal approval for their local hazard mitigation plans by November 1, 2004 to be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) (*44 CFR Part 201.6(a)(1) and (2)*) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grant Program (*Federal Register 68(129):40284-40285, 7 July 2003*) funds. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region III Director may grant an exception to this requirement in extenuating circumstances (*44 CFR Part 201.6 (a)(3)*). In these cases, a plan must be completed within 12 months of the award of the HMGP or PDM grant. If the plan is not completed within this timeframe, the HMGP or PDM grant will be terminated, and any cost incurred after notice of termination will not be reimbursed.

The Hazard Mitigation Plan may serve to integrate documents and plans produced under other emergency management programs and with your community's comprehensive planning process. Although quite a bit of work is required to determine hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities, the main goal of the planning process is the determination of mitigation strategies. These strategies will form into mitigation projects, and these projects will allow a community to be proactive, not reactive to its disaster situation. Areas of concern will be pre-identified and possible solutions to the problem considered. This will allow communities to seek funding to mitigate these areas prior to a disaster, and will allow quicker application for post-disaster mitigation funding sources.

Your Hazard Mitigation Plan can easily become a key resource in the daily actions within a community. It can become the driving force to improve policy, to strengthen code and code enforcement, and to solicit funding to enhance your community and its resilience to disaster. The mitigation plan's hazard identification and risk analysis alone can improve Emergency Operation Plan analyses and lead to better community design and development through comprehensive planning. Although the mitigation planning effort may seem overwhelming, the outcome is worth the work.

I appreciate the willingness and openness that our staff has received in presenting this planning requirement to you, and I hope that we will be able to help you through this planning process to develop a successful and useful Hazard Mitigation Plan for your community.

*“Working to Protect People, Property and Our Communities”*