

WHAT IS A HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN & WHY DOES SIERRA COUNTY NEED ONE?

A [local hazard mitigation plan](#) (LHMP) is a living document that addresses threats from potential natural hazards and identifies possible strategies to reduce impacts. The purpose of hazard mitigation planning is to reduce loss of life and property damage by minimizing the impact of natural disasters.

The [Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000](#) (DMA) requires local governments to develop, update, and adopt a federally approved multi-hazard mitigation plan in order to receive [pre- and post-disaster mitigation funds](#) from the [Federal Emergency Management Agency's \(FEMA\) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#). Sierra County received a grant from FEMA to develop a multi-jurisdictional LHMP and is currently working with a contract consultant, Black & Veatch, to update the plan.

The Sierra County Office of Emergency Services is leading the update of the Sierra County LHMP with additional Planning Partners. This multi-jurisdictional plan will detail potential natural hazards that could affect some or all of our residents and will also allow the County and its Planning Partners to be eligible for future mitigation funding from FEMA. The goal of this plan is to identify projects that can reduce damages from future natural and non-natural hazards.

WHAT IS HAZARD MITIGATION?

Hazard mitigation is any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. The best way to do this is to create a thorough plan well in advance, before any disasters happen.

Phases of Emergency Management

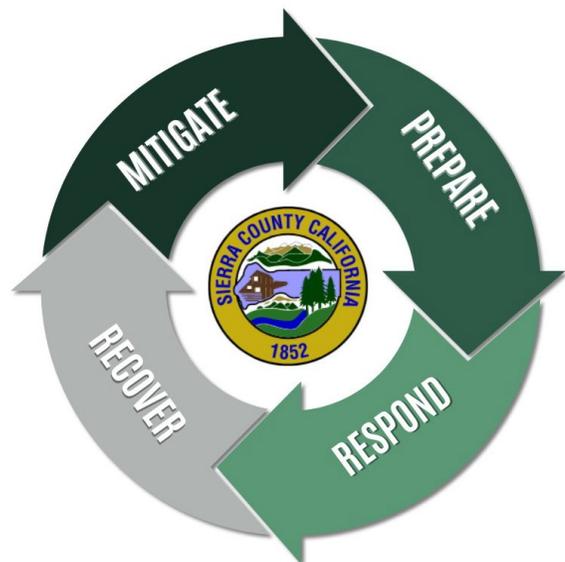
[Emergency management](#) focuses on reducing or avoiding potential losses from hazards, assuring prompt and appropriate assistance from damages, and achieving rapid and effective recovery measures.

This process is divided into four phases: **mitigation** (preventing future damages and losses), **preparedness** (getting ready for a disaster before it happens), **response** (actions taken during and immediately after a disaster), and **recovery** (bouncing back after the disaster). Communities need to think about these steps to lessen the effects of disasters, respond effectively when they happen, and recover afterwards.

The mitigation phase is all about finding ways to prevent disasters or lessen their impact. It involves thinking of long-term solutions to help reduce the effects of disasters before they happen.

WHAT IS A HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN?

A hazard mitigation plan is a comprehensive strategy that assesses the risks and vulnerabilities associated with various hazards, such as wildfires, droughts, earthquakes, extreme temperatures, and flooding. It identifies actions to reduce the impacts of these hazards, protect lives, buildings, infrastructure, and property, and strengthens our ability to recover from these types of events.



Planning Process

The County and its Planning Partners will be using a phased process to prepare the Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, which follows FEMA and Cal OES requirements, along with the [U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#) and the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric) [Climate Resilience: Steps to Resilience practitioners' methodologies](#).



How Does the Plan Benefit the Sierra County Planning Area?

The Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan will assist the County and its Planning Partners with the following:

- An increased understanding of the hazards faced locally
- Development of more sustainable and resilient communities
- Eligibility for FEMA pre- and post-disaster mitigation funding for activities and planning before disasters strike
- Reducing long-term impacts and damages to human health and structures, as well as reduced repair costs

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [State of California 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)
- [Cal OES Hazard Mitigation Planning Division](#)
- [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Planning](#)
- [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program](#)