



Kane County Natural Hazards Mitigation Committee

Annual Report
For
2004

TO: Members of the Kane County Board
FROM: Kane County Natural Hazards Mitigation Committee
SUBJECT: Annual Report for 2004
Date: January 25, 2005

Kane County is subject to natural hazards that threaten life and health and have a history of causing extensive property damage. To better understand these hazards and their impacts on our communities, the County's Department of Environmental Management and Office of Emergency Management jointly undertook the creation of the Kane County *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan*.

The *Plan* identifies activities that can be undertaken to reduce safety and health hazards along with property damage caused by natural hazards. It focuses on the five major natural hazards that threaten Kane County: floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, thunderstorms and winter/ice storms. ***The full Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan can be reviewed or downloaded at www.co.kane.il.us/hazards/.***

On October 14, 2003 the Kane County Board passed resolution 03-308 adopting the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. A provision in this resolution requires the committee to submit an annual written report to the County Board, summarizing the *Plan's* implementation status for the proceeding year.

The following is our report for 2004;

A. A review of the original Plan.

Kane County has been subject to a variety of natural hazards over the years including tornadoes, floods, ice storms, blizzards, severe thunderstorms and high wind events. The County's Emergency Operations Plan takes these types of events into account and identifies appropriate response activities.

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 states that after November 1, 2003, local governments applying for pre-disaster mitigation funds must have an approved local mitigation plan. After November 1, 2004, a mitigation plan will also be needed before applying for post-disaster mitigation funds under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

In 2002 the County Board approved the creation of a Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan planning committee. The Committee met monthly from October 2002 through September 2003 to develop the plan that was presented to and approved by the Board in October 2003. The Committee identified 17 key action items for implementation.

We have now finished the first year of the Plan. A number of preliminary steps have been completed so that the ongoing portions of the action items can be started. The next annual report will be issued in November 2005.

B. A review of natural disasters during 2004.

No natural disasters occurred in Kane County during 2004

C. A review of the action items.

1. Building Code Improvements

Adopt the latest International series of codes, the new national standard that is being adopted throughout the country.

Status: Six municipalities have already adopted all or part of the IBC/IRC; two are working on near-term adoption and several others are studying the ramifications of adoption.

2. Improved Code Enforcement

Develop and conduct training for building department staff on the natural hazards aspects of the International Codes, regulation of mobile home installation, and the new County stormwater management ordinance and its flood protection, wetland protection, erosion and sediment control and best management practices provisions.

Status: The County Water Resources and Environmental Management Departments continue to work with the various municipal departments to promote understanding and compliance. Staff members have developed a seminar on best management practices for the protection of County water resources. It will be presented to the County Department of Transportation staff and interested municipalities in February 2005.

3. Review of Plans and Development Regulations

When they are up for revision; comprehensive plans, land use plans, and zoning and subdivision ordinances should incorporate mitigation provisions.

Status: As an ongoing issue, plans will be reviewed for inclusion of appropriate mitigation items. Examples: Big Rock has adopted their Land Use Plan, which incorporates hazard mitigation concerns and is currently working on a zoning ordinance that will address mitigation issues. Carpentersville is undertaking a comprehensive review of subdivision regulations and their zoning ordinance. Geneva conducted a review and update of their Comprehensive Plan. Lily Lake is currently revising their Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Montgomery has included open space needs and natural resource preservation/restoration in their

Comprehensive Plan. North Aurora updated their Subdivision Control Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance during the past year.

4. Facility Audits

Develop a checklist to evaluate a property's exposure to damage from the hazards of flooding, high winds, lightning, hail and power losses from downed lines. Evaluate all critical facilities using the checklist.

Status: The checklist has been developed. Evaluation audits will be started in 2005 and continue until completed.

5. Retrofitting Incentives

Establish a program of technical assistance and financial incentives to encourage property protection measures on private property, such as:

- Surface and subsurface drainage improvements,
- Berms and regrading for shallow surface flooding,
- Sewer backup protection
- Relocating furnaces and water heaters out of basements
- Tornado safe rooms
- Installing lightning rods

Status: Technical assistance is available from several sources: the County's Water Resources and Environmental Management Departments, the County's Office of Emergency Management and municipal building/engineering departments.

6. Repetitive Loss Projects

Protect the buildings in repetitive loss areas 7, 8, 9, 12 and 14. These are the top priority areas based on the flood hazard and type of construction, as explained in the criteria on page 5-12. Acquisition is the recommended property protection approach for areas 7, 8, 9, and 12 and elevation is recommended for areas 9, 12 and 14. Properties in the other repetitive loss areas could be protected by retrofitting measures that could be funded for much less under the cost share program proposed in action item 5.

Status: The County's Environmental Management Department has continued to solicit the municipalities for project plans to reduce or eliminate repetitive loss issues. During the past year, Geneva has submitted information to the County for grant funding to correct a problem in the southeast area of the City. Montgomery has identified repetitive loss properties within the Village and is developing strategies to satisfy mitigation needs. The County has engaged a consultant to review all repetitive loss properties in unincorporated areas for possible buyouts.

7. Drainage Maintenance

Implement a formal and regular drainage system maintenance program.

Status: The County and all municipalities have and will continue to maintain their storm drainage systems. Batavia is developing written procedures for their drainage maintenance program. Big Rock is considering a 700-foot extension of a storm sewer line to link with two other existing lines for flow improvement. During 2004, Geneva inspected and cleaned 53,000 feet of storm sewer line and all storm sewer inlets on the east side of the City were stenciled “No Dumping / Drains to River”. The County’s Environmental Management Department routinely inspects area of concern in the various creeks in the County and responds to both municipal and citizen notifications of blockages. Lily Lake has two projects at this time; the Hazelwood drainage project in conjunction with the Kane County Forest Preserve District and the Indian Creek Subdivision project.

8. Urban Forestry

Implement an urban forestry program that qualifies the municipality to become a Tree City, USA.

Status: A number of municipalities have already qualified for Tree City USA recognition: Batavia – 7 years, Elburn – 5 years, and Geneva – 7 years. Montgomery, North Aurora and South Elgin are working on implementing the necessary programs to be recognized. Budget constraints may be a limiting factor for several communities.

9. Flood Warnings

Review the gauging system in the County, especially the western rural areas, to determine where additional rain and stream gages would be worthwhile.

Status: Kane County Office of Emergency Management is working with the National Weather Service and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to augment Fox River flow gauges especially in the East Dundee area.

10. Improved Emergency Response

Conduct a review of emergency response plans and programs to:

- Ensure that each municipality has an emergency management coordinator or liaison.
- Identify where additional activities are needed to respond to natural hazards, especially activities that can be undertaken after a flood warning and before the flood arrives.

- Ensure there is adequate and current information on critical facilities.
- Incorporate post-disaster procedures for public information, reconstruction regulation and mitigation project identification.
- Conduct a table top exercise at least once a year
- Identify what rural areas could use additional warning capabilities.

Status:

- Municipal liaisons have been identified and quarterly meetings are planned for 2005.
- Critical facility lists continue to be updated to ensure that all critical infrastructure will be audited.
- The County's Emergency Operations Plan continues to be reviewed, updated as needed and exercised on the legislatively mandated cycle.
- Warning capabilities have been increased during 2004 with the addition of a new Emergency Alert System encoder in the County's EOC and the countywide installation of the EMnet Warning & Information System in municipal public safety offices and area hospitals.

11. Flood Control Projects

Implement structural flood control projects, including farm drainage improvements and projects to improve bridges and culverts, where they prove to be the most appropriate approach to reduce flood damage. Such projects need to meet the criteria listed in Section 8.8.

Status: Several specific flood control projects have been identified and are either underway. Aurora currently has sanitary/storm sewer separation projects valued at over \$3 million in process and plans on expanding that program to over \$8 million during 2005. Carpentersville's Main Street Bridge project will increase its cross section and reduce upstream flood possibilities. Geneva has completed design engineering for improvements in the southeast area of the City. They have also arranged with the Union Pacific Railroad to install two large diameter culverts within White's Creek at Sandholm St. to begin the capital portion of the improvement program. Montgomery is currently working with an owner/developer to construct a 200-acre storm water retention area adjacent to Waubonsie Creek and south of the Parkview neighborhood.

12. Hazard Mitigation Materials

Prepare background information, articles, and other explanations of hazard mitigation topics.

Status: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency and Kane County OEM hazard mitigation publications for flooding, winter storms, severe thunderstorms and tornadoes, power outages and warning systems are available for distribution.

13. Outreach Projects

Prepare and disseminate outreach projects based on the materials provided under action item 12.

Status: Information has been disseminated through a number of channels; specifically the Fox River Chapter, American Red Cross did a mass distribution of 73,000 pieces via all newspapers in the County during September, 2004.

14. Property Protection References

Provide building departments, libraries and other interested offices with a list of references on property protection that can be ordered for free from state and federal offices. A special effort should be made to identify references on insurance, flood proofing and other methods of flood protection.

Status: Fox River Chapter, American Red Cross has provided copies of all of their relevant public dissemination literature to freely copy and distribute.

15. Plan Adoption

Adopt this *Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan* by passing the resolution in Section 10.4 or 10.5, as appropriate.

Status: Kane County and all municipalities that participated in the planning process have adopted the Plan.

16. Mitigation Coordinating Committee

The Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee would be converted to a permanent advisory body in the County's resolution to adopt this *Plan*. It would:

- Act as a sounding board for hazard mitigation issues
- Disseminate hazard mitigation ideas and activities to all participants.
- Monitor implementation of this Action Plan and
- Report on progress and recommended changes to the County Board and each municipality.

Status: The Standing Committee has been created. It met twice during 2004 to review mitigation activities (April 27 and October 12). During the October meeting a regular semi-annual meeting schedule was established for 2005 and

subsequent years (2nd Wednesdays of April and October – 10 AM – Building ‘A’ Auditorium). Special meetings may be called for review of any natural disasters that occur.

17. Community Rating System

Host a workshop to review floodplain management activities currently undertaken and those recommended by this *Plan*. Compare these activities to those credited under the Community Rating System.

Status: A workshop was held to introduce the CRS to communities that may not have understood its operation. Batavia and Carpentersville are completing the required documentation to comply with CRS. Big Rock will begin the CRS process during 2005. Huntley expressed an interest in submitting an application, as did Kane County. South Elgin’s Community Development department is working on improving the village’s CRS rating

D. Un-completed Action Items.

Of the 17 action items, 14 are ongoing and three (15-Plan Adoption, 16-Mitigation Coordinating Committee & 17-Community Rating System) are closed. Because of the adoption date of the Plan (October 2003), a number of action items could not be adequately addressed in the FY 2004 budget cycle. These items will be completed as manpower and funding allow.

E. Plan Review Recommendations

One year after plan adoption, the document has undergone a comprehensive review by the Natural Hazards Mitigation Committee. No recommendations for plan modification were suggested at this time. The committee urged work to continue on the remaining 14 action items.