

**IROQUOIS COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL
NATURAL HAZARDS MITIGATION PLAN
PUBLIC FORUM SUMMARY HANDOUT**

**DECEMBER 10, 2024
4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

Each year natural hazards (i.e., severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, severe winter storms, flooding, etc.) cause damage to property and threaten the lives and health of Iroquois County residents. Since 1990, Iroquois County has been included in nine emergency and major federal disaster declarations and experienced at least \$29.1 million in recorded property damages and \$79.7 million in recorded crop damages.

In the last 10 years alone (2014 – 2023), there have been 49 thunderstorms with damaging winds, 33 extreme cold events, 29 riverine flood events, 28 severe winter storms, 27 flash flood events, 16 excessive heat events, 10 severe storms with hail one inch in diameter or greater, 9 tornadoes, 2 droughts, and 2 lightning strikes with verified damages and in the County. While natural hazards cannot be avoided, their impacts can be reduced through effective hazard mitigation planning and implementation.

What is hazard mitigation planning?

Hazard mitigation planning is the process of determining how to reduce or eliminate property damage and loss of life from natural hazards. This process helps the County and participating jurisdictions reduce their risk by identifying vulnerabilities and developing mitigation actions to lessen and sometimes even eliminate the effects of a hazard. The results of this process are documented in a natural hazards mitigation plan.

Why prepare an updated natural hazards mitigation plan?

By preparing and adopting an updated natural hazards mitigation plan, participating jurisdictions become eligible to apply for and receive federal hazard mitigation funds to implement mitigation actions identified in the plan. These funds, made available through the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, can help provide local government entities with the opportunity to complete mitigation projects that would not otherwise be financially possible.

Who participated in the update of the County’s Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan?

Recognizing the benefits that could be gained from preparing an updated natural hazards mitigation plan, Iroquois County invited all the local government entities within the County to participate. The following jurisdictions chose to participate in the Plan update with the County:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ❖ Ashkum, Village of | ❖ Crescent Township | ❖ Iroquois-Ford FPD |
| ❖ Ashkum Township FPD | ❖ Crescent-Iroquois FPD | ❖ Loda FPD |
| ❖ Beaverville, Village of | ❖ Danforth, Village of | ❖ Lovejoy Township |
| ❖ Belmont Township | ❖ Danforth FPD | ❖ Ridgeland Township |
| ❖ Buckley FPD | ❖ Gilman, City of | ❖ Watseka, City of |
| ❖ Central Citizens’ Library District | ❖ Gilman Community FPD | ❖ Wellington-Greer FPD |
| ❖ Central CUSD #4 | ❖ Iroquois County CUSD #9 | ❖ Woodland, Village of |
| ❖ Chebanse, Village of | ❖ Iroquois West CUSD #10 | ❖ Woodland FPD |

IROQUOIS COUNTY MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL NATURAL HAZARDS MITIGATION PLAN

How was the Plan update developed?

The Iroquois County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan update was developed through the Iroquois County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee. The Committee included representatives from each participating jurisdiction, as well as input from agriculture, business, economic development, education, emergency services, healthcare, social services, and utilities. The Planning Committee met five times between January 2024 and February 2025.

Which hazards are included in the Plan update?

After reviewing the risk assessment, the Planning Committee chose to include the following hazards in the Plan:

Natural Hazards

- ❖ severe storms (thunderstorms, hail, lightning & heavy rain)
- ❖ floods (riverine & flash)
- ❖ extreme cold
- ❖ severe winter storms (snow & ice)
- ❖ excessive heat
- ❖ tornadoes
- ❖ drought
- ❖ earthquakes

What is included in the Plan update?

The Plan update is divided into sections that cover land use and development; planning process; risk assessment; jurisdiction capabilities; mitigation strategy, including the jurisdiction-specific mitigation action lists; plan maintenance; and adoption. The majority of the Plan update is devoted to the risk assessment and mitigation strategy.

The risk assessment identifies the natural hazards that pose a threat to the County and includes a profile of each hazard, which describes the location and severity of past occurrences, reported damages to public health and property, and the likelihood of future occurrences. It also provides a vulnerability analysis that estimates the potential impacts each natural hazard would have on the health and safety of the residents of Iroquois County, as well as the buildings, critical facilities, and infrastructure in the County.

The key component of the mitigation strategy is a list of the projects and activities developed by each participating jurisdiction to reduce the potential loss of life and property damage that results from the natural hazards identified in the risk assessment. These projects and activities are intended to be implemented *before* a hazard event occurs.

What happens next?

Any comments received at today's public forum and during the public comment period will be reviewed and, where applicable, incorporated into the draft Plan update before it is submitted to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for review. Once IEMA-OHS and FEMA have reviewed and approved the Plan, it will be presented to the County and each participating jurisdiction for formal adoption. After adopting the Plan update, each participating jurisdiction will be eligible to apply for federal mitigation funds and can begin implementing the mitigation actions identified in the Plan.