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## Introduction

### Federal Emergency Management Agency Training

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the central point of contact within the Federal Government for a wide range of emergency management activities. The agency has numerous roles, including coordinating Government activities, providing planning assistance, guiding and advising various agencies, and delivering training.

FEMA's training program is delivered through the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). EMI provides emergency management training to enhance emergency management practices throughout the United States for the full range of potential emergencies.

A complete listing of EMI courses is available on FEMA's website. The address is <http://www.fema.gov>.

### Independent Study Courses

The independent study program is one way that EMI offers emergency management training to the general public and to select emergency management audiences.

Go to <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/> for information on these courses.

These independent study courses are geared toward both the general public and persons who have local government responsibilities for emergency management. All courses are suitable for either individual or group enrollment, and are available at no charge. Courses include a final examination, and persons who score 75 percent or better on the examination are issued a certificate of completion by EMI.

If you have questions about these courses, you can call 301-447-1200, e-mail [independent.study@dhs.gov](mailto:independent.study@dhs.gov), or write to:

FEMA Independent Study Program  
Administration Office  
Emergency Management Institute  
16825 S. Seton Avenue  
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

For information regarding application for academic credit and fees, contact the Independent Study Office at EMI at 1-800-238-3358.

### Introduction to Mitigation

As the costs of disasters continue to rise, governments and ordinary citizens must find ways to reduce hazard risks to our communities and ourselves. Efforts made to reduce hazard risks are easily made compatible with other community goals; safer communities are more attractive to employers as well as residents. As communities plan for new development and improvements to existing infrastructure, mitigation can and should be an important component of the planning effort. Mitigation means taking action to reduce or eliminate long-term risk from hazards and their effects.

FEMA has produced a series of courses intended to train those who have responsibility for, or simply interest in, reducing hazard risks in their States, communities, or Tribes. This course provides an introduction for those who are new to emergency management and/or hazard mitigation.

Complete this course at a comfortable pace. Upon completing all five lessons, the activities and lesson quizzes, and the final exam, you should be able to:

- Define hazard mitigation and the importance of hazard mitigation in sustainable communities.
- List the main components of each phase of the local hazard mitigation planning process.
- Identify hazard mitigation measures that are applicable to your community's hazard risk problems.
- Identify resources for projects that reduce hazards.

### Course Lessons

The course “Introduction to Hazard Mitigation” has five lessons:

**Lesson 1. Hazard Mitigation: Sustainable Futures for At-Risk Communities**

– Explores the reasons and need for planning for a sustainable, disaster-resistant community; describes how hazard mitigation fits into the cycle of emergency management, describes hazard mitigation concepts and practices; explains the relationships between hazard mitigation planning, reducing hazard risk, and sustainable communities; and outlines several Federal initiatives to support hazard mitigation as well as the planning guidance established by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

**Lesson 2. Gaining Support for Hazard Mitigation**

– Emphasizes the need for a systematic approach to reducing the risk of future disaster damages through mitigation planning; and introduces a systematic planning process, methods for developing community-wide support for mitigating hazard risks, and how to take the first key steps toward a local hazard mitigation program.

**Lesson 3. Assessing Risks**

– Describes and demonstrates a methodology to determine what hazard risks potentially threaten a community and how vulnerable the community is to those risks; and explains how a community uses this risk assessment as the basis for developing hazard mitigation and emergency plans.

**Lesson 4. Building and Implementing a Community Hazard Mitigation Plan**

– Explains how to develop a community hazard mitigation plan; connects the risk assessment to the development of a mitigation strategy; and provides the guidelines for writing and implementing a hazard mitigation plan that meets the needs of the community as well as the plan requirements of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

**Lesson 5. After a Disaster: Recovery and Hazard Mitigation Programs**

– Describes the role of the Federal, State, and local governments in disaster recovery, and how to identify and utilize post-disaster opportunities to implement planned hazard mitigation actions.

### How To Complete the Course

You will remember the material best if you take your time completing the lessons and doing the activities. Throughout the lessons there is white space next to the text where you can make notes.

Each of the five lessons follows a similar format. A summary concludes the end of the descriptive portion of each lesson. Following the summary, each lesson includes an activity called Hazard Mitigation in Your Community. These activities consist of questions regarding hazards, disasters, and mitigation in your own community. Answering these questions will help you relate the course material to your own circumstances to make it more meaningful.

A quiz called Test Yourself follows each lesson and includes 5 to 10 true-false, fill-in-the-blank, or multiple-choice questions. An answer key is provided for each quiz.

Take a break at the end of each lesson to give yourself time to think about it. Then go back and take the quiz at the end of the lesson, reviewing the material if you missed any questions.

A Glossary of hazard mitigation terminology is located after the final lesson.

A list of Mitigation Resources identifies organizations and publications that provide additional hazard mitigation information.

The Final Examination tests knowledge gained from the course. The exam consists of 30 multiple-choice and true-false questions. An answer sheet is supplied with the course materials, along with mailing instructions for having the exam graded and the certificate awarded.