

Spotlight

Department of Homeland Security



Office of Inspector General

June 2012 DD-12-13

Why This Matters

Comal County received a \$16.3 million award from the Texas Division of Emergency Management, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grantee, for a mitigation project following Hurricane Rita in 2005. FEMA provides such assistance to state, Tribal, and local governments, and certain types of private nonprofit organizations to implement measures designed to reduce the loss of life and property from future natural disasters.

DHS Response

FEMA officials agreed with our finding and recommendation 2, and withheld comment on recommendation 1. FEMA's written response is due within 90 days.

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funds Awarded to Comal County, Texas

What We Determined

Comal County's project did not meet FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) eligibility requirements. As a result, we question the entire project totaling \$16,302,516 as ineligible costs. FEMA officials approved this ineligible project because they did not review the County's benefit cost analysis methodology and, therefore, were not aware that the project did not meet FEMA eligibility requirements.

What We Recommend

We recommend that the Acting Regional Administrator, FEMA Region VI: (1) disallow \$16,302,516 (\$12,226,887 Federal share) as ineligible costs because the project did not meet HMGP eligibility requirements, and (2) develop and implement project review and approval processes and procedures to ensure FEMA Region VI enforces project eligibility requirements in the future.

For Further Information:

Contact our Office of Public Affairs at (202)254-4100, or email us at DHS-OIG.OfficePublicAffairs@dhs.gov