

Lee County Emergency Management Agency

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact

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Countywide Plan for Disasters

Dixon, IL (February 2, 2010)—Lee County will begin preparing a countywide plan that will identify activities and projects to reduce the damages caused by natural hazards such as tornadoes, floods, snow storms, thunderstorms and ice storms. This plan will also evaluate man-made hazards. The plan is called an All Hazard Mitigation Plan and will be funded through a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

All Lee County municipalities are invited to participate in this planning process. Ashton, Dixon, Franklin Grove, Harmon, and Steward have already committed to participate. There is still time for other municipalities to join the process.

“Developing this plan will help us be better prepared before storms hit. The focus of this plan is to reduce the harm to residents and property. We have an emergency response plan. The mitigation plan we want to prepare is aimed at prevention so it will complement our response plan. The county and each participating municipality who adopts the plan will become eligible for federal funds for projects that might not otherwise be constructed,” said Kevin Lalley, Lee County EMA Coordinator.

Lee County is vulnerable to severe storms, flooding, and tornado damage. Since 1980, Lee County has had Federally declared disasters because of severe storm and flood damage in 1985 1993 and 1996. Major weather fronts moving and colliding across northern Illinois frequently trigger severe winter storms with some of the higher snowfall accumulations in Illinois being recorded in this region of the state. While the most destructive tornadoes have occurred in other counties, Lee County has experienced 19 tornadoes since 1950.

A Lee County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee has been created with representatives from each participating municipality along with technical partners and other stakeholders. Meetings of this committee will be conducted as working sessions so that any interested resident can attend and ask questions. The purpose of these working sessions is to gather and discuss information that will be used to prepare the plan.

The first meeting of this team will be Thursday February 18, at 1 PM at the Lee County Sheriff’s Department 306 Hennepin Street, in Dixon. The committee will meet periodically through the next several months to develop a draft plan. Lee County residents are welcome to attend every meeting.

“Input from various segments of the population will be used to develop this plan,” added Kevin Lalley.

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