



# McHenry County Emergency Management Agency

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Countywide Master Plan for Disasters

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WOODSTOCK, IL - McHenry 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. The plan is called a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and will be funded through a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

“Developing this plan will help us be better prepared before storms hit as well as making us eligible for federal funding to implement projects that can reduce damages on our communities and families. McHenry County is highly vulnerable to tornado damage based on documented tornado damage impacting us since 1950, and we have also had two federally declared disasters based on flooding,” said County Board Chairman Ken Koehler.

This mitigation plan will focus on prevention not responses to disaster, thus it does not duplicate or replace any emergency response plans already developed. “Mitigation” means taking steps to prevent or reduce damages from storms on people and property. Any county or community that has a hazard mitigation plan that is compliant with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is eligible for hazard mitigation grant money from FEMA.

A McHenry County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team will be created with representatives from each municipality that chooses to participate along with technical partners and other stakeholders. Meetings of this team 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 held **November 16, 2009 at 10:30 am** in the McHenry County Administration Building (Conference Rooms B & C) at 667 Ware Road, Woodstock, IL 60098. The team will meet periodically through the next several months to develop a draft plan. Citizens of McHenry County are welcome to attend every meeting.

“An ongoing dialogue between local government and agriculture, business, education, emergency management, health, and utility representatives, along with other interested residents will be developed. Through this dialogue the plan will be developed with constant input from the public,” added County Board Chairman Ken Koehler. After the plan is drafted, more opportunity for public review and comment will be provided through public forums, the McHenry County website, and other methods.

Other specific opportunities for public input will be available. For further information on participation opportunities and information about McHenry County’s Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan visit <http://www.mchenrycountyil.gov> or call McHenry County Emergency Management at 815/338-6400.

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