



**FEMA**

# Press Release

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## **HOMELAND SECURITY RELEASES GRANT FUNDS FOR PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS**

*Jersey Village and Harris County Flood Control Receive Over \$4 Million for Acquisition and Elevation Projects*

DENTON, TEXAS – Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response, announced today the release of over \$4 million in Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) Grant Program funds to Texas for pre-disaster mitigation activities. The grant program is a Presidential initiative, administered by Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for pre-disaster mitigation planning and projects primarily addressing natural hazards.

“President Bush recognizes the great importance that mitigation is an essential step in reducing the loss of life and property to natural disasters,” said Brown. “States and localities are critical leaders in disaster reduction, and the Department of Homeland Security is committed to providing our partners with the tools they need to be prepared.”

The announcement of the PDM-C grant awards includes nearly \$2.6 million to the Harris County Flood Control District to acquire homes in the City of Houston and Harris County that are within the 100-year floodplain. In the past decade, FEMA has awarded \$131 million in mitigation funds to purchase more than 2,400 flood-prone properties in the greater Houston area. Today’s announcement also includes \$1.5 million for the City of Jersey Village. The City will use the funds to elevate 17 homes above the 100-year flood level. Since Tropical Storm Allison struck Houston in June 2001, FEMA has also invested more than \$200 million in flood protection efforts at the Texas Medical Center and other Houston hospitals.

The fiscal year 2003 budget provided \$150 million under the National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund to initiate a competitive grant program for pre-disaster mitigation activities, and has moved forward since Congress reauthorized the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program this past January. The intent of the PDM-C grant program is to provide a consistent source of funding to state, tribal, and local governments for pre-disaster mitigation planning and projects. Funding these plans and projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations.

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States, territories, tribes, and local governments submitted over 450-mitigation project and planning sub-applications for consideration under the PDM-C grant program. To fulfill the competitive requirements of the program and to select the most cost-effective applications, all applications were reviewed for their eligibility and completeness, and then ranked and evaluated by a competitive national evaluation panel. The national evaluation process was rigorous in design and implementation, ensuring that all applications competed fairly and that the most cost-effective applications were recommended for selection.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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# Fact Sheet

## PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION COMPETITIVE (PDM-C) GRANT PROGRAM

The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) Grant Program provides funds to states, territories, and federally recognized tribes for pre-disaster mitigation planning and preparedness activities. The grant program is one of President Bush's initiatives, administered by FEMA for pre-disaster mitigation planning and projects primarily addressing natural hazards. Funding these plans and projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations.

The fiscal year 2003 budget provided \$150 million under the National Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund to initiate a competitive grant program for pre-disaster mitigation activities, and has moved forward since Congress recently reauthorized the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program this past January. The intent of the PDM-C grant program is to provide a consistent source of funding for pre-disaster mitigation planning and projects. The national priority for FY 2003 was funding mitigation projects that address the National Flood Insurance Program's repetitive flood loss properties.

### *FY 2003 PDMC Facts & Figures*

- **Applications.** FEMA received a total of 459 competitive planning and project applications by the October 6, 2003 deadline. Applications were submitted from 52 out of 55 states and territories, 13 tribal governments and the District of Columbia. No applications were received from the states of Nebraska and Alaska, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- **National Evaluation Participants.** A total of 118 mitigation professionals representing the Federal government, 31 states and territories, and 3 tribal representatives participated in evaluating the eligible applications during the national evaluation.

### **PDM-C Grant Awards**

Applications that scored highest as a result of national evaluation were selected for funding. The final pre-award activities are coordinated with the receiving state, tribe or territory by FEMA regional offices and are awarded on a rolling basis as pre-award activities are completed. Pre-award issues include: verifying or refining timelines and completion dates; beginning environmental / historic reviews; confirming or clarifying information (e.g., flood zones, repetitive loss numbers, etc.); verifying specific communities that will complete plans as a result of planning grants; and confirming the activity and recipient will meet all federal grants requirements.

**Competitive Process Timeline:**

The PDM-C application period began July 7, 2003, and ended October 6, 2003, with the application deadline.

**Review:** FEMA Headquarters and regional personnel completed the eligibility and completeness reviews of all applications in October 2003. In addition, technical reviews were done concurrently with the eligibility and completeness reviews. The technical review looked at applications for accuracy, completeness and documentation. With the aid of expert contractors, FEMA reviewed all of the project applications for engineering feasibility, cost effectiveness, and environmental / historic considerations.

**Ranking:** A national ranking of applications was completed at the end of October 2003, and was based on quantitative factors, including the benefit-cost ratio for projects, level of risk for planning activities, the state/tribal ranking, community mitigation factors, etc.

**National Evaluation:** During a three-week national evaluation in November 2003, evaluators reviewed applications based on qualitative factors, including feasibility, staff and resources, implementation timeline and expectations, and consistency with the national priorities of repetitive loss. The national evaluation process was rigorous in design and implementation, ensuring that all applications competed fairly and that only proven, cost-effective applications are recommended for selection.

**FY 2004 PDM-C Grant Program**

On January 22, 2004, Congress reauthorized the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program for one year, through December 31, 2004, with a bill to extend the PDM-C for three years still pending in Congress.

In FY 2004, Congress appropriated a total of \$150 million for the PDM program.