



City of Sea Isle City  
**Department of Construction and Zoning**  
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# MEMO

To: Mayor Leonard Desiderio  
Business Administrator George Savastano

From: Cornelius Byrne – Construction Official/Floodplain Manager

Date September 20, 2013

Subject: Status of hazard mitigation plan

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On November 9, 2010 Sea Isle City adopted the Cape May County multi-jurisdictional all hazards mitigation plan, known as the “Plan”, as the town’s natural hazard mitigation and flood protection plan. This memo is my progress report to the Administration on the implementation of that Plan.

For credit under the community rating system this memo must be distributed to the media and be made available to the public. It will be sent out as an e-alert to all registered citizens. Copies of this report are available at City Hall at 4501 Park Road. This report will also be available on the City’s website.

1. Background

This plan was put together by the Cape May County Office of Emergency Management and approved by the State of New Jersey OEM and Fema Region 2. The following are the reasons Sea Isle City saw fit to adopt the Plan in its entirety:

- 1) Adopts in its entirety, the Cape May County Multi-Jurisdictional All Hazards Mitigation Plan (“the plan”) as the jurisdiction’s Natural hazard Mitigation Plan, and resolves to execute the actions identified in the Plan that pertain to this jurisdiction.
- 2) Will use the adopted and approved portions of the plan to guide pre- and post-disaster mitigation of the hazards identified.

- 3) Will coordinate the strategies identified in the Plan with other planning programs and mechanisms under its jurisdictional authority.
- 4) Will continue its support of the mitigation planning Committee as described within the Plan.
- 5) Will help to promote and support the mitigation successes of all participants in this Plan.
- 6) Will incorporate mitigation planning as an integral component of government and partner operations.
- 7) Will provide an update of the Plan in conjunction with the County no less than every five years.

The plan contains fourteen hazard mitigation initiatives for the City to implement to reduce or prevent flood damage. This memo will serve as the status report on the implementation of those initiatives.

## 2. A Review of the plans initiatives

SIC-1a Where appropriate, support retrofitting of structures located in hazard-prone areas to protect structures from future damage, with repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties as priority. Identify facilities that are viable candidates for retrofitting based on cost-effectiveness versus relocation. Where retrofitting is determined to be a viable option, consider implementation of that action based on available funding.

Status: Due to hurricane Sandy, the town has expanded its program to help and guide property owners to sources of funding to mitigate and elevate structures in flood prone areas. We have assisted property owners who were issued substantial damage letters to mitigate and elevate their structures.

SIC- 1b Where appropriate, support purchase, or relocation of structures located in hazard-prone areas to protect structures from future damage, with repetitive loss and severe repetitive loss properties as priority. Identify facilities that are viable candidates for relocation based on cost-effectiveness versus retrofitting. Where relocation is determined to be a viable option, consider implementation of that action based on available funding.

Status: We have purchased a buildable lot in the North end of Sea Isle City and it has been added to our open space inventory. We are now in the process of building a new flood zone and FEMA compliant municipal structure on the site of the old Public Safety Building. We will also be mitigating the former City Hall building to alleviate future flood issues. We have worked with property owners in the repetitive loss areas of the City. Having done a visual inspect of all repetitive loss properties it was discovered approximately 71 properties on the list have been demolished or otherwise brought into compliance. Appropriate paperwork will be submitted to have those structures removed from our repetitive loss list.

## SIC-2 Work with FEMA and ISO to re-establish participation in CRS

Status: In October of 2012 after much work cooperation of multiple departments we were readmitted into the CRS program as a Class 6 community which entitled property owners of compliant structures to a 20% discount on their flood insurance premium. Due to hurricane Sandy a fast track modification to the CRS point total was granted for the adoption of the Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE). With our adoption of the ABFE maps we obtained the required points to achieve a Class 5 rating. This will give homeowners of compliant structures a 25% discount on their flood insurance premiums.

Not all communities have rigorous building codes, nor do all communities enforce their codes with equal commitment. Yet the effectiveness of local building codes can have a profound effect on how the structures in the community will fare in a hurricane, earthquake, or other natural disaster.

ISO is an independent statistical, rating, and advisory organization that serves the property/casualty insurance industry. ISO collects information on a community's building-code adoption and enforcement services, analyzes the data, and then assigns a Building Code Effectiveness Classification from one to ten. Class one represents exemplary commitment to building-code enforcement. The concept behind BCEGS is simple. Municipalities with well-enforced, up-to-date codes demonstrate better loss experience, and their citizens' insurance rates can reflect that. The prospect of minimizing catastrophe-related damage and ultimately lowering insurance costs gives communities an incentive to enforce their building codes rigorously. We were visited by Ruth Morales of the Insurance Services Office Inc. (ISO) for an evaluation of how well we enforce our adopted building codes. During this visit we provided documentation which after review showed we have obtained a BCEGS score of three out of three. This is an improvement from our previous score of four out of four. By making needed changes to office policy, staffing and procedures we have improved our BCEGS score which proves Sea Isle City's continued commitment to reducing damage from flooding and other natural disasters.

## SIC-3 Continue to support the implementation, monitoring, maintenance, and updating of this Plan, as defined in Section 7.0

Status: We have maintained contact with the County Office of Emergency Management and will forward a copy of this memo to them for inclusion into the County's updating of the plan. We will continue to work with the County to provide all information needed for the required five year update to this plan.

## SIC-4 Strive to maintain compliance with, and good standing in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Status: We continue to vigorously enforce Chapter 14 Flood Prevention of the Sea Isle City General Ordinances and are continuously looking to improve our standing in the CRS Program. As part of the CRS program the following flood information is provided to our residents through multiple venues including our annual outreach brochure, our webpage and our newsletter:

- a) Flood hazard
- b) Flood map
- c) Flood safety
- d) Flood insurance
- e) Property protection
- f) Permit requirements
- g) Substantial improvement requirements
- h) Drainage maintenance
- i) Natural and beneficial functions

SIC-5 Continue to develop, enhance, and implement existing emergency plans.

Status: Sea Isle City is now in the process of evaluating our local OEM plan and our participation in the County OEM plan with regards to its use during the hurricane Sandy event. We are currently reviewing that data for possible amendments to our plan.

SIC-6 Create enhance maintain mutual aid agreements with neighboring communities.

Status: At this time we continue to maintain all mutual aid agreements with local, County and State government.

SIC-7 Support County-wide initiatives identified in Section 9.1 of the County Annex

Status: Where appropriate Sea Isle City has supported all Cape May County mitigation initiatives.

SIC-8 (CMC-28) Install permanent protection to CR-619, from the Whale Beach area in Sea Isle City to the Strathmere section of Upper Township, to replace the existing Geo Tube installed in the late 1990's. The Geo Tube is beyond its design life.

Status: Along with Cape May County, Sea Isle City has provided routine maintenance as well as emergency repairs in the aftermath of hurricane Sandy. Sea Isle City had a beach replenishment project which included sand to cover the Geo Tubes during the North end project. We are now in negotiations with The Army Corps of Engineers to secure a federally sponsored replenishment project which will continue to provide protection to CR-619 from Sea Isle City to Whale Beach.

SIC-9 Replenish the South end beaches from 73<sup>rd</sup> to 94<sup>th</sup> St

Status: In early 2012 Sea Isle City completed a beach replenishment project of approximately 700,000 cubic yards of sand between the 73<sup>rd</sup> St and 94<sup>th</sup> St beaches. We are now in negotiations with FEMA for storm damage repairs of those beaches and with The Army Corps of Engineers to provide a federally sponsored replenishment and continued maintenance project for those beaches as well as the rest of Sea Isle City.

SIC-10 New ordinance for bulkhead elevation requirements (same as Ocean City)

Status: By Ordinance 1489 adopted on September 14, 2010 Sea Isle city required on new or replacement bulkheads in the City to finish at a height of a minimum 7.5 (NGVD29)

SIC-11 Purchase generators at public buildings

Status: Due to Hurricane Sandy and the forced relocation of City Hall, Construction Office and Public Safety (Police) personnel to the former Sea isle City Public School the school building was equipped with a natural gas fueled generator to provide emergency power for all essential equipment which will allow for the continued operation of government services in the event of an emergency. The building being designed as the new Municipal Services building will be equipped with emergency generators and existing generators will be moved to the Public Works building located at 40<sup>th</sup> St & Central Avenue.

SIC-12(CMC-25) Elevate JFK Blvd into Sea Isle City and upgrade storm water system.

Status: In the spring of 2013 Cape May County completed the redesign and elevation of JFK Blvd from the Sea Isle City Bridge to Landis Avenue using input from the Sea Isle City beach to bay corridor committee. The improvements include improvements to the roadway, drainage system, lighting and traffic signals to stop the persistent flooding and to ensure its use as an evacuation route in case of emergency.

SIC-13(CMC-27) Install bulkheads along back bay in Sea Isle City in locations (large areas) that are not protected. This includes both public and private property

Status: Sea Isle City has a bulkhead maintenance plan and has replaced street end bulkheads at the western point of 47<sup>th</sup> Place, 43<sup>rd</sup> Place at the north & south side of the Rio Del Ponte and are in the process of repairing the bulkhead at Roberts Avenue from 79<sup>th</sup> Street to 80<sup>th</sup> Street. At this time there are no plans to bulkhead unbulkheaded City owned properties.

SIC-14 Host a public forum to educate and help inform our citizens so that they are best prepared for flooding situations

Status: This year on May 18th Sea Isle City held its annual community day. At this event we had representatives from FEMA present to explain the newly adopted ABFE maps. They also provided information and brochures relating to; flood zones throughout the town, flood insurance, hazard mitigation and building elevation.

The above information, along with the following services are continually provided by the Construction Office or are accomplished throughout the year by the appropriate department.

A) Map information services

- B) Send out information mailers via the tax and water bills and the City e-alert system
- C) Provide FEMA flood information on the City's website [www.seaislecitynj.us](http://www.seaislecitynj.us)
- D) Distribute flood information to local banks, realtors and title companies
- E) Contact residents in the repetitive loss area of Sea isle as recognized in the mitigation plan
- F) Provide site specific information to all who request it and maintain a log
- G) We have tested and maintained our e-alert and reverse 911 emergency system and have found them both to be operational
- H) We have provided maintenance to our storm water drainage system while continuing to enforce our storm water maintenance plan

### 3. Conclusion

Sea Isle City has worked very hard at the implementation of the Plan for Hazard Mitigation. We have made significant progress with the following initiatives of the plan SIC-1A, SIC-1B, SIC-3, SIC-4, SIC-, SIC-6, SIC-7, SIC-8, SIC-9, SIC-11 and SIC-14.

The following SIC-10 and SIC-12 have been completed and should be considered Completed.

SIC-2 Sea Isle City has worked very hard on getting reinstated into the CRS Program. We are currently a Class 5 community. The work to maintain that achievement never stops. I am continuously enforcing the current provisions of Chapter 14 Flood Prevention while constantly seeking new programs which can be implemented to better protect and warn our residents from flood damage and loss. At this time the Administration and I are reviewing the new preliminary work maps released by FEMA to determine how they should be implemented into our flood damage prevention ordinance. As these maps become official, we will adopt necessary changes into our codes and ordinances to make sure we protect our residents, infrastructure and buildings to the best of our abilities.