

Mitigation Grant Programs

Vermont Emergency Management

Scope of Course

- Review required elements of 44 CFR
- Discuss what makes a good application
- Provide tips for preparing a winning grant application
- Information on where to go for additional resources

Overview of FEMA Mitigation Programs

Three primary FEMA grant programs:

- Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM)
- Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

Overview of Programs

- Hazard Mitigation: any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and homes due to natural disasters
- Most application requirements are the same for all FEMA programs; only minor differences exist
- Process of identifying winning projects and standards is the same for all

Federal-State-Local Framework

Basic process includes:

- Local towns/agencies apply for grants
- VEM assists local communities with applications
- State mitigation committee reviews and ranks applications
- FEMA reviews applications and makes final determinations
- FEMA conducts environmental reviews for successful project applications

Local (sub-grantee) Roles & Responsibilities

- Take the initiative in seeking out mitigation opportunities
- Develop a mitigation proposal
- Coordinate with local homeowners for possible buy-outs
- Submit applications to the State (grantee)
- Implement approved projects

State (grantee) Roles & Responsibilities

- Acts as facilitator between federal and local governments
- Sets mitigation priorities and timelines for grants
- Provides assistance during application process
- State mitigation committee selects projects to be funded
- Administers and manages the program

FEMA's Roles & Responsibilities

- Sets grant guidelines and provides programmatic oversight
- Shares financial management with state
- May provide technical assistance
- Authorized to award federal funds

FEMA Grant Requirements

To receive a FEMA mitigation grant, a town must:

- Have a FEMA approved & adopted local mitigation plan
- Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), if a special flood hazard area (SFHA) has been identified

Pre-Disaster Mitigation Competitive (PDM-C) Program

- The Pre-Disaster Mitigation program provides funds to States, US Territories, recognized Native American (Indian) tribes and communities for hazard mitigation planning and for the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Successful plans and projects reduce the overall risks to people, infrastructure and homes while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations.

PDM Program

Funding Limits

PDM grants are awarded on a nationally competitive basis. For FY 2012, Vermont may receive a \$575,000 “set aside” \$75 million available nation-wide

- Mitigation projects: \$3 million cap on federal share
- Mitigation plans: \$800,000 cap on federal share for new plans
- Mitigation plan updates: \$400,000 cap on federal share
- Information dissemination: not to exceed 10% of total funding; must be related to approved plan or project

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

- Available only after a federal disaster declaration
- Allocated in the immediate post-disaster timeframe
- Projects must be cost effective
- HMGP funds represent 15% of total expenditures for Public Assistance
- States manage the program and set priorities

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)

- FMA provides funding for projects related to properties which are insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)
- Vermont receives about \$100,000 for FMA projects per year; more funding may be available through other state's unused allocations
- Typical FMA projects include: home buy-outs, structure elevations, floodproofing of municipal buildings, upgrades to roads, culverts or bridges
- Check box in application for FMA consideration

Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC)

- Up to 100% federal share if sub-applicant is unable to meet local share requirement
- Property must have received one or more NFIP insurance payments
- Good explanation must be given as to why 25% local share can not be provided

Property Acquisitions

- For home buy-outs, the town is the sub-applicant on behalf of the homeowner
- The town is responsible for extending the formal buy-out offer to the property owner following a grant award
- Property owner may agree to accept the 75% federal share as total compensation, if the town is unable or unwilling to provide the 25% match share.

Application Development

Importance of Quality Applications

- Provides FEMA & State reviewers with information needed to make eligibility determination
- Expedites the review process
- Ensures rapid implementation of the project or plan once the project is approved
- Expedites the funding process and environmental approval

Applicant & Sub-Applicant Eligibility

- Applicant Eligibility (Grantee)
State
- Sub-Applicant Eligibility (Sub-Grantee)
 - State agencies
 - Local governments
 - Native American (Indian) tribes
 - Public colleges or universities (PDM only)

Eligible Activities

- Voluntary property acquisition (buy-outs) or relocation
- Structure elevations
- Floodproofing of public buildings
- Road, bridge, culvert upgrades for floodproofing
- Stream bank erosion mitigation
- Small-scale flood control projects
- Planning grants (single community or multi-jurisdictional); must result in FEMA approved plan

Partial List of Ineligible Activities

- Warning or alert systems, including response and communication equipment
- Generators for non-critical facilities that are not part of a larger project; stand-alone generators will not be funded
- Major flood control projects
- Flood studies or flood mapping
- Phased or partial projects
- Any project for which another Federal agency has primary jurisdiction

Important Components of Application

Description of Mitigation Proposal:

- History of damages/problem description
- Scope of work of proposed solution
- Budget/cost estimates (line items)
- Work schedule (2 year performance period)
- Benefit-cost analysis (BCA)- projects only
- Engineering study (projects only)

What FEMA Looks For:

- Likelihood of success
- Adequate staff to implement project or planning grant
- How well costs and scheduled will be managed
- Involvement and leveraging of local partners
- Outreach activities or model community

Hazard Info/Problem Description

Give details of existing problem with data/documentation to substantiate it:

- Describe the nature of the problem, i.e. homes, roads or culverts flooded, critical infrastructure affected, etc
- Provide data that describes the hazard's impact, i.e. 3 ft of water in 12 homes, 3 miles of town roads flooded
- Provide detailed damage estimates and dates of hazard event , e.g. homes incurred \$50,000 in flood damage on Aug. 2; repairs to Main St will cost \$200,000
- Indicate frequency of storm event (e.g.100 year flood)
- Provide geographic data: latitude/longitude coordinates, maps with impacted area indicated, sketches, digital photos

Proposed Solution

Describe solution to problem in Scope of Work

Provide detailed written description with the following:

- Geographic location with street names & numbers
- Houses for buy-out or structural elevation including building design
- Indicate sizes, lengths of pipes, culverts or pumps
- Indicate level of protection provided by completed project
- Link proposed solution to the problem

Building-Specific Information

- Flood Zone information (from FIRM map)
- Construction dates
- Building type (2 story with basement)
- Building use (single-family, apartment complex, commercial building)
- Construction and foundation type (building codes)
- Building area in square feet
- Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of lowest floor and proposed elevation height (get from VT ANR)

Documentation

Sources and types of information to include:

- Digital photos of proposed project area
- Newspaper articles on disaster and past events
- Repetitive loss information and/or flood claim information from FEMA (available from Regional office)
- Maps, diagrams, sketches of affected area with proposed project clearly marked.

Project Cost Estimates

- Provide detailed line item budget
- Do not use “Lump Sum”; do line item breakdown, identifying construction costs, labor costs, equipment, in-kind contributions, unit costs, etc.
- Indicate source of estimate: bids from qualified companies, FEMA reimbursement schedules, etc.

Cost Estimates (continued)

- DO NOT list contingency fees
- As there are no allowable cost-overruns, you may include an additional 10% in construction costs in line items for materials (e.g. steel, concrete)
- Identify all contractor costs upfront
- Identify project management and pre-award costs in project application & budget
- Project maintenance costs after initial implementation are not reimbursable (maintenance cost can be included in BCA)

Program Management Costs

- Management costs are eligible but must be documented and listed as separate line item
- For projects involving multiple structures (buy-outs, elevations, etc) costs must be determined per each individual structure

Proposed Work Schedule

- 2 year performance period; additional 1 year extensions are possible if extenuating circumstances are documented
- Describe projected length of each task: days, weeks, months
- Indicate milestones (measurable steps for implementation) by quarter
- List all phases of tasks, including appraisal, surveys, legal offers, permitting, demolition, site preparation, construction, etc.

Cost Effectiveness

Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA)

- BCA must be completed for projects; planning grants do not require a BCA
- Benefit-cost ratio of 1.0 or higher must be shown (OMB requirement)
- For every \$1 spent, at least \$1 or more in future benefits must be demonstrated
- FEMA BCA template is now available version 4.5; newer version to be released

Identification of Project Alternatives

- In addition to the selected solution, two additional alternatives must be identified and described
- One of these alternatives may be “no action” taken
- The other alternative should be a feasible alternative solution to the existing problem

Environmental Review

- List the expected impacts of the project on the natural environment
- Coordinate with appropriate agencies, e.g. Agency of Natural Resources, Vtrans, Fish & Wildlife
- FEMA will conduct a full environmental review once the project is selected for funding

Project Maintenance

To ensure that the project will function at maximum efficiency & will accomplish measurable mitigation, indicate the following:

- Identify short and long-term maintenance costs
- Indicate the maintenance schedule
- Identify the agency that will perform long term maintenance

Reporting Requirements

- Quarterly performance and financial reports are required for all approved grants
- Reimbursements may be delayed if quarterly reports are not submitted
- Final reports due after project is completed
- Reports are submitted to VEM and FEMA

Clear & Detailed Applications Are a Must

- If possible, have someone not involved in application preparation review it for clarity and completeness
- VEM is available to provide assistance and answer questions
- The State and FEMA need the required information in order to make an informed eligibility decision for each application

Questions?

FEMA's e-Grants Application

e-Grants

- PDM-C & FMA: e-Grants is an intuitive, Web-based application that allows applicants to use the Internet to apply for FEMA mitigation grants. It replaces the paper based process previously used.
- HMGP applications are still submitted in hard copy and not in e-Grants
- e-Grants facilitates the review and award process

e-Grants

- As e-Grants is an Internet based application, the program is installed on an application server managed and maintained by FEMA
- No software to install on your computer
- All application files are stored on the e-Grants server and not on your personal computer

How Applications are Processed

e-Grants uses the same preparation and processing of applications as in the paper based process. Figure 1: *Application Flow through eGrants* depicts the application process flow in eGrants

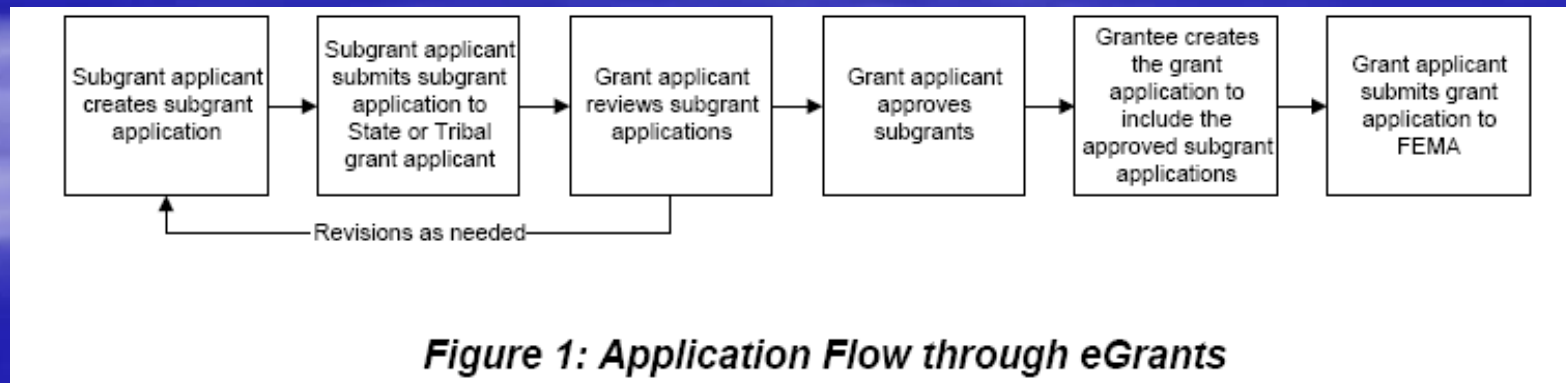


Figure 1: Application Flow through eGrants

E-Grants

The primary difference between paper-based applications and the electronic process is that in e-Grants all applications are created, revised, submitted and reviewed online.

Registering for e-Grants

- Submit a Letter of Intent to VEM
- You must be a registered user to access e-Grants. Contact the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) to obtain a user name and password for e-Grants
- It is your responsibility to secure and protect your e-Grants user name and password

e-Grants Access

Link for e-Grants:

<https://portal.fema.gov>

E-Grants help line:

toll-free 1 866 476-0544

Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Tips for e-Grants

- Please “save” your application often: you have a 30 minute window when logging on. Each time you do a “save”, you will get another 30 minutes
- Do not use “back” and “forward” buttons on your browser. Instead, use application buttons “go back”, “save” or “save & continue” located at the bottom of your screen
- Failure to follow these guidelines could result in loss of data