

April 2021 RMD National News Flash

RMD RISK MANAGEMENT
DIRECTORATE



National News Flash

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Coming Up

Note: Some dates are subject to change due to COVID-19

National Financial Capability Month – April

Building Safety Month – May

National Hurricane Preparedness Week – May 3-9

American Planning Conference – May 5-7

ASFPM Conference – May 10-14

National Dam Safety Awareness Day – May 31

Topic Suggestions?

We want to hear from you! Click below to submit your topic requests for the National Call or National News Flash!

FEMA RMD PM SharePoint Portal Access

Click the link below to access the RMD PM SharePoint Portal.

Having SharePoint Access Issues?

Click the link below to receive help getting access to SharePoint.

We want to know what you think!

Click below to send us your questions and feedback.

April is National Financial Capability Month

By Individuals and Community Preparedness Division (ICPD)

Picking up the pieces of your life after a tornado, flood, or other disaster can be challenging. One of the most important things that may help you recover faster from a disaster is having all key documents together in one place.

The free "[Emergency Financial First Aid Kit \(EFFAK\)](#)" helps keep all your important information at your fingertips. It gives you a way to organize critical financial, medical, and household information. It includes checklists and forms to help you gather the documents you will need after a disaster or other emergencies. It also provides tips on storing and safeguarding your information.

Here are our top reasons why we think you should start filling out the "[Emergency Financial First Aid Kit](#)":

1. **Recover Faster from an Emergency.** One of the most important things that may help you recover faster from a disaster is having all of your key documents stored in one place.
2. **Reduce Stress and Increase Your Peace of Mind.** Far too often, we see that people are searching for copies of their records during the aftermath of an emergency. Not having the ability to find these important records can hamper recovery. The [EFFAK](#) helps you organize the critical financial, medical, and household documents before you need them.
3. **Build Financial Resilience.** Not only does the [EFFAK](#) help you compile your most important records, but it also offers you tips and resources to increase your credit score and protect your financial records.

Check out the EFFAK by clicking [here](#). We also created a series of five EFFAK animations to make filling out the EFFAK easier.

Complete the [EFFAK](#) today for peace of mind tomorrow!

Faster Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) Turnaround Times with eLOMA Super User Status

By [David Mummert](#)

eLOMA is an interactive online MT-1 determination tool which is available on the Mapping Information Platform (MIP) at www.hazards.fema.gov. This time saving, user-friendly web-based application provides licensed land surveyors and professional engineers with a system to submit Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) requests to FEMA.

The tool is designed to make a determination regarding the Letter of Map Amendment application in a shorter amount of time than the standard process. Approximately 75% of the LOMA applications FEMA receives annually meet the eLOMA criteria and could be submitted using the tool.

The eLOMA process has significantly reduced the determination time of up to 60 days when an audit is not required. Even when an audit is required the audit is processed within five business days of FEMA receiving all of the required supporting data.

The tool has been updated to make the process even easier to use. The audit selection criteria have been revised so that fewer eLOMA submittals need auditing. Also, more help links have been added to the tool to provide more information about the requirements for the data entry fields.

Once an eLOMA user has demonstrated that they have a comprehensive understanding of the application process they can be promoted to super user status. In order to be promoted to the super user level a user has to submit three consecutive eLOMAs that have complete supporting data. User also need to use the eLOMA tool on a regular basis.

Once a user reaches the super user level, their audit frequency is reduced dramatically. Super users are not subjected to many of the automatic audit triggers that default users are. When super users

are audited, the turnaround time for those audits is typically shorter than it is for default users.

In order to begin using eLOMA, a surveyor or engineer sets up an account through the Mapping Information Platform (MIP) using individual license certification information. Once the user is registered on the MIP they can log into eLOMA and start submitting MT-1 applications. For more information on eLOMA, please select the 'Learn about eLOMA' link on the MIP homepage.

Resilient Nation Partnership Network "Next Generation of Resilience" Student Showcase

By [Bradley Dean](#)

The [Resilient Nation Partnership Network](#) (RNPN) will host the "Next Generation of Resilience" Student Showcase on April 28. During our first-ever student showcase, four students will present their work and research supporting the priorities of the RNPN:

- Promoting natural hazard mitigation actions.
- Advancing equitable resilience initiatives.
- Expanding capacity through partnerships.

All student work will also be featured in the special May edition of the [Resilient Nation Roundup](#) newsletter. Partners, resilience professionals and students nationwide will be invited to attend this 90-minute event. Participants will be able to provide feedback, ask questions, and engage in thoughtful dialogue across diverse resilience disciplines. There will be dedicated time at the conclusion of the presentations to network and discuss work experience, career paths and resume building, and general questions across the resilience sector.

[Register today](#). If you have any questions or would like more information, please send an email to FEMA-ResilientNation@fema.dhs.gov or visit the [RNPN website](#).

Supporting Resilience in Rural and Agricultural Communities

Every community is unique, and disasters affect every community differently. FEMA's Risk Management Directorate developed [A Guide to Supporting Engagement and Resiliency in Rural Communities](#) and [Connecting Mitigation and Agriculture](#) as part of its "Guides to Expanding Mitigation" series. These tools help FEMA staff, partners and providers enhance engagement and planning activities in rural communities to improve mitigation and risk reduction efforts.

When a disaster such as a major flood occurs and crops are at risk, it is too late to start the mitigation actions that would help local farmers and others. Teams focused on mitigation planning and programs in rural communities can use both the Rural Engagement Guide and the Agriculture Guide. The guides include ideas for collaboration and actionable steps to better understand and leverage the knowledge and experience of local decision makers and influencers from the agriculture and rural communities. The Rural Engagement Guide and the Agriculture Guide prepare users for effective collaboration at each Risk MAP community engagement touchpoint, such as the consultation coordination officer meeting and public open house.

With these tools partners can build trust, rapport and understanding of the community's needs. They will see the opportunities to advance local resilience and mitigation efforts, creating plans and projects that reflect the whole community, both residents and businesses. In FEMA's experience, when a community is engaged as a partner and shares in efforts such as meeting planning, they are more likely to own their risks and endorse outcomes that advance resilience and mitigation.

To learn more about "A Guide to Supporting Engagement and Resiliency in Rural Communities", "Connecting Mitigation and Agriculture", and other risk reduction resources, visit [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov).

A Guide to Supporting Engagement and Resiliency in Rural Communities and the Connecting Mitigation and Agriculture Guide

Taking Shelter from the Storm: Safe Rooms Save Lives!

Release of updated FEMA P-320 with Design Plans and FEMA P-361

By [Pataya Scott](#)

Every year, tornadoes, hurricanes and other extreme windstorms cause numerous injuries and deaths in the United States. While we cannot stop these storms from occurring, we can respond by understanding the hazards and carefully planning to protect ourselves from their effects.

When properly designed and constructed or installed per FEMA criteria, safe rooms provide the highest level of protection from tornadoes, hurricanes, and other extreme windstorms. To this end, FEMA is pleased to announce the release of its updated fifth edition of FEMA P-320 (2021), "Taking Shelter from the Storm: Building or Installing a Safe Room for Your Home" and its updated fourth edition of FEMA P-361 (2021), "Safe Rooms for Tornadoes and Hurricanes: Guidance for Community and Residential Safe Rooms."

These 2021 editions of FEMA P-320 and FEMA P-361 update and refine criteria for how to design and construct a safe room that provides near-absolute protection from wind and wind-borne debris for occupants. They both include updates from the International Code Council® (ICC®) and the National Storm Shelter Association (NSSA®) (ICC/NSSA) "Standard for the Design and Construction of Storm Shelters" (ICC 500). In addition, FEMA P-320 includes prescriptive safe room designs that meet FEMA criteria for one- and two-family dwellings are also included as a part of this publication for multiple material options.

Safe room designers should feel confident when they implement FEMA's guidance for their projects. Safe rooms that meet the guidance in FEMA P-361 provide near-absolute protection from the deadly winds and wind-borne debris associated with extreme-wind events. Safe rooms have, and continue, to save lives!

FEMA P-320 and FEMA P-361 can be downloaded from [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov) "[Safe Room Resources](#)" webpage. Also on this webpage are five fact sheets that were updated to align with the updated publications:

- Foundation and Anchoring Criteria for Safe Rooms
- Flood Hazard Siting and Elevation Criteria for Residential Safe Rooms
- Flood Hazard Siting and Elevation Criteria for Community Safe Rooms
- Residential Tornado Safe Room Doors
- Community Tornado Safe Room Doors: Installation and Maintenance

To learn more about FEMA Safe Room Program, [click here](#).

To learn more about FEMA building science work, [visit our website](#).

Please contact the FEMA Safe Room helpline at Saferoom@fema.dhs.gov or 866-927-2104 for questions on FEMA Safe Room resources.

Hybrid Engagement in North Dakota Shows the Future of Successful Meetings

By [Madi Pluss](#)

As states, counties and local communities across the country have started to loosen their COVID-19 restrictions, there has been a slow, but gradual, resumption of some in-person activities once exclusively virtual during the global pandemic.

As a result of this changing landscape, local officials in Emmons County, North Dakota, requested an in-person component to its recent Flood Risk Review (FRR) meeting. FEMA Region 8 and the North Dakota Cooperating Technical Partner (CTP), North Dakota State Water Commission, held a "hybrid" FRR meeting for both in-person and virtual stakeholder audiences.

Resilience Action Partners provided customized virtual logistics and facilitation services while the CTP hosted the in-person meeting in the town of Linton. The hybrid offering was developed based on feedback from the local community and provided several lessons for future meetings.

While attendees noted that in-person meetings foster natural conversations that may not translate well into a virtual setting, they also noted the hybrid solution was professional and thorough. The meeting hosts agreed the key to success is understanding the community's needs and then accommodating those needs wherever possible.

"This unique environment has provided an unprecedented opportunity for us to develop tailored solutions to meet communities' needs and creatively support the Risk MAP process. This furthers our goal to help educate stakeholders about flood risk and empower them to mitigate that risk," said Madi Pluss of FEMA Region 8.

The Emmons County, North Dakota FRR meeting had virtual and in-person components to provide a 'hybrid' approach to Risk MAP community engagements.

Supporting Comprehensive Mitigation Programs Through Training and Capability Building

By [Shubha Shrivastava](#)

Advancing the capabilities of state and local communities to implement mitigation is one of FEMA's top priorities. The National Mitigation Planning Program has identified "early and often engagement" as a theme. This means providing the right information at the right time and in the right way.

We aim to tailor our assistance to meet our stakeholders. The program hosts a training committee with representatives from headquarters and all 10 regions. The committee is working together on a national approach to facilitate the implementation of mitigation plans and programs, using foundational courses, tools and resources on advanced topics. The committee is focused on building out several training courses and guides:

- **Future Conditions Training:** This training will teach how mitigation plans can consider conditions related to future changes in the climate, population and land use.
- **Scoping Hazard Mitigation Plan Updates:** This training assists local communities with updating the data and priorities in their hazard mitigation plans without completing a full rewrite.
- **Advancing Capabilities for Mitigation Guide:** This guide provides a series of questions to start conversations with states about their capabilities for implementing a comprehensive mitigation program.

The training committee meets monthly to discuss general timelines and responsibilities for both internal and external capability building initiatives. In addition to these monthly discussions, the committee holds calls to dive deeper into special topics, inform the regions of other national training activities, and highlight useful tools and resources.

The committee also facilitates the cross-regional review call, which further promotes consistency and synchronizes mitigation policy knowledge.

The committee follows a charter that guides its activities and focuses its scope ([explore the charter and other resources here](#)). If you would like more information or a copy of the e-mail newsletter, please contact Kate Skaggs as Kate.Skaggs@mbakerintl.com.

If you have questions about the News Flash or would like to suggest future features, please contact Vince Brown at Vincent.brown@fema.dhs.gov or FEMA-RMD-Comms@fema.dhs.gov.

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