



**FEMA**

# Press Release

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## **FEMA FUNDS ONGOING FLOOD BUYOUTS**

DENTON, Texas -- The U. S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today nearly \$4.5 million in grants to support ongoing flood reduction activities in Harris County. The grants will fund the purchase of 64 repetitively flood homes in Crosby, unincorporated Harris County, Houston, Humble and Kingwood. The Harris County Flood Control District will receive the funds as part of the district's ongoing comprehensive flood management activities.

"Flooding remains the most pressing disaster risk to residents of Harris County," said Ron Castleman, FEMA Regional Director. "The grants announced today will help families move out of harm's way and will return flood-prone land to its natural state. The buyouts aid the community and the property owners."

The FEMA mitigation grants, available through the Pre-Disaster Mitigation-Competitive (PDM-C) program, provide 75 percent of project costs. The remaining funds come from local resources. Harris County competed with communities around the country for these funds. FEMA previously awarded two other grants to Harris County worth \$2.6 million. With today's announcement, the County has received more than \$7 million from the program to address repetitive loss properties.

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, and manages 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.