

# Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

## Hazard Mitigation Plan

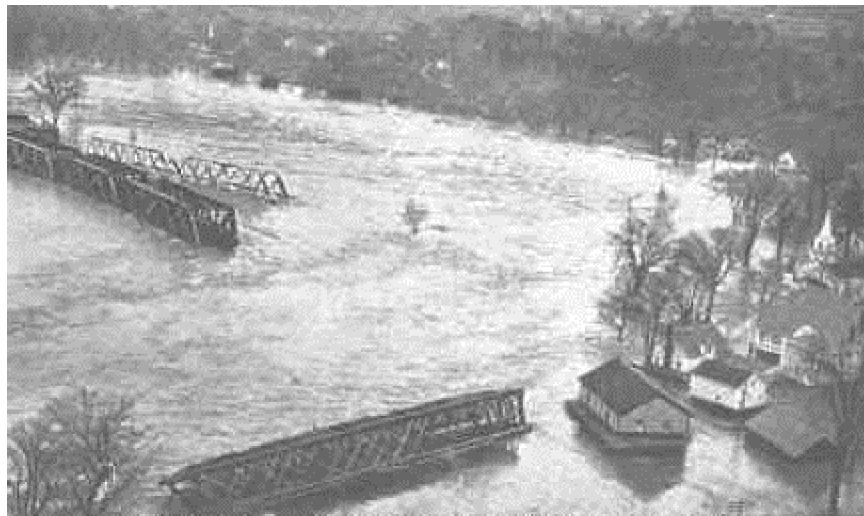
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# TOWN OF HOOKSETT NEW HAMPSHIRE

## HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN



FLOOD SCENE. WRACK AND RUIN AT HOOKSETT, N. H.

View of Merrimack River in Hooksett with destruction caused by the flood of 1936

## Preface

*Hazard Mitigation Planning* is a relatively new field, spearheaded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) during the 1990's after Hurricane Andrew caused well over 20 billion dollars in damage over several southern states. That event resulted in 54 fatalities and the disruption of millions of lives. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, developed by FEMA, was intended to help both communities and states prepare for, and deal with, such disasters. While New England normally does not have hurricanes of Andrew's magnitude, this area does experience many types of hazardous occurrences that cost both lives and money.

Natural hazards occur during all four seasons in the Northeast: winter ice, snow, and nor'easters; spring flooding; summer downbursts and thunderstorms; and fall hurricanes. Planning to make a community *disaster-resistant* before these storms occur can help to save lives as well as homes and infrastructure.

The Town of Hooksett has had its share of disasters over the past 100 years. In 1936, flooding caused Main Street to be under 18 feet of water, while taking out homes and train trestles in its path.

FEMA is considering an increase in its budget from \$3.5 billion to \$7 billion, with much of the proposed increase earmarked for terrorism preparedness. Another proposal is to add \$300 million for the next three years to upgrade the existing Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). Many communities have outdated maps that do not reflect the true extent of flooding potential.

A community's eligibility for hazard mitigation funding in the future will depend upon it having *adopted* a hazard mitigation plan. Mitigation measures contained within the plan may be sufficient to warrant a grant. Since the State of New Hampshire Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is the agency that will either approve or disapprove of this and other local hazard mitigation plans, a standard format is being followed for each community that is developing a plan.

It is hoped that this document will be a good first step toward analyzing hazards in Hooksett, and forecasting where potential disasters might occur.

## Acknowledgements

The Hooksett Town Council would like to thank the following people for contributing their time and effort to complete this *Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan*:

### Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee Members

Mike DiBitteto, Committee Chairman, Town Council

Stephen Agrafiotis, Police Chief

Doug St. Pierre, Planning Board Chairman

Mark Bourque, Past Planning Board Chairman

Michael Howard, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator

Harold Murray, Fire Department/Emergency Management

Charles F. M. Watson, Town Planner

*“Prevention pays. It outperforms Wall Street hands down, and at the same time, it pays dividends that you can’t calculate in dollars and cents. It saves lives. It saves suffering. It saves loss of property. Prevention saves jobs. Bottom line, prevention works.”*

James Lee Witt, Director, Federal Emergency Management Agency

Thanks also to:

The New Hampshire Department of Safety, Division of Fire Safety, Office of Emergency Management, which developed the “New Hampshire Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan,” and

The Southwest Regional Planning Commission, which developed “Hazard Mitigation Planning for New Hampshire Communities.”

Both publications served as models for this Plan.

This Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan has been approved by Jane Hubbard, Community Hazard Mitigation Planning Coordinator, New Hampshire Office of Emergency Management.

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# Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire Hazard Mitigation Plan Executive Summary

This *Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan* has been developed to help Hooksett become a *disaster-resistant* community by taking measures to reduce future losses from natural or man-made hazardous events *before* they occur. The *Plan* was developed by the Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee, made up of community members and town officials.

Natural hazards are addressed as follows:

- Flooding
- Wind
- Wildfire
- Earthquake
- Ice & Snow Events
- Other Hazards

The Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee identified “Critical Facilities” and “Areas at Risk.” Highlights of these features include:

Critical Facilities:

- Safety Complex
- Emergency Operations Center
- Town Hall
- Post Office
- Fire Service Facilities
- Law Enforcement Facilities
- Public Works Garage
- Emergency Shelters
- Evacuation Routes
- Bridges
- Telephone Facilities
- Wireless Communication Facilities
- Emergency Fuel Facilities
- Hospitals

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Areas at Risk:

- Isolated Homes
- Dams
- Major Highways
- Electrical Power Substations
- Hazardous Material Facilities
- Above Ground Storage Tanks
- Recreation Areas
- Problem Culverts
- Hydro Power Plants
- Historic/Unique Resources
- Commercial/Economic Impact Areas
- Water and Wastewater Treatment Facilities
- Churches
- Elderly Housing
- Schools
- Day Care Centers
- Socio-Economic Impact Areas

## Existing Hazard Mitigation Strategies

The Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee identified strategies related to hazard mitigation as follows:

- Floodplain Development Ordinance
- Wetlands Conservation Overlay District (zoning)
- Groundwater Resource Conservation District (zoning)
- Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- Evacuation and Notification
- State Dam Program
- Road Design Standards
- Shoreland Protection Act
- Best Management Practices (BMP's)
- Electrical Back-Up Generators
- Town Radio System
- Hazardous Materials Regulations
- Manufactured Housing Parks (zoning)
- Regulation of Travel Trailers and Motor Homes
- Hazardous Materials (State Regs)
- IBC Building Code *and* Local Building Code
- Steep Slopes and Class VI Roads
- Comprehensive Emergency Management Planning for Schools (CEMPS) – Partial, not complete

## New Hazard Mitigation Strategies

The Hooksett Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee listed new hazard mitigation strategies as follows:

- Update Flood Maps
- River Stewardship Program
- Tree Maintenance Program
- Wellhead Protection Program
- Purchase flood prone properties
- Elevate structures in the floodplain
- Discourage construction in the floodplain
- Encourage the Conservation Commission to become active in acquiring flood prone properties for conservation and preservation purposes
- Education for citizens related to flood mitigation
- K-Mart area culvert upgrade
- Enhance GIS for floodplain mapping
- Purchase and install river gauges with transmitting capabilities
- Purchase material for hurricane proofing of buildings
- Purchase emergency vehicles and equipment (Boats)
- Develop web site for floodplain information

- Implement culvert analysis for inventory and condition
- Develop culvert maintenance system
- Plan for needed new cisterns and maintenance
- Early warning system for floodplain residents
- Maintenance program for detention/retention ponds
- Purchase hoses for wildfire fighting
- Coordinate with Town of Candia for potential effects on the Town of Hooksett of Dube Pond Dam
- Develop control mechanism for beaver actions in wetlands
- Coordinate with Town of Bow for potential effects on the Town of Hooksett of Garvin Falls Dam
- Purchase portable generators
- Increase public awareness of personal responsibilities for emergency management

This Plan is scheduled to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis by the Hooksett Emergency Management Director in coordination with the Hooksett Town Council. The next update will be during 2003.