

PART SEVEN: ACTION PLAN

Sibley County General Goals and Objectives

County general goals and objectives were developed based upon knowledge of county resources, political will, and existing hazard mitigation capacity. Sibley County Priority Goals were prioritized according to how many jurisdictions identified them as priorities in their completed survey and how those jurisdictions ranked the threat they believe that the hazard poses to the community. Strategies for each goal were also based upon their respective cost-effectiveness, relative ease of implementation using existing or readily available resources, and their anticipated acceptance within Sibley County communities. While participants based upon personal projections made cost estimates, more in-depth analysis will be conducted during future updates to the plan, in the form of a cost-benefit analysis. In addition, the planning process permitted deliberation of key issues and strategic areas of focus which influenced the decision making process in identifying county goals. Further prioritizations of goals identified below were chosen based upon vulnerability and capability of implementing hazard mitigation strategies.

1. Goal: To establish warning systems in the event of an emergency.

Strategies:

- A. By acquiring sirens to alert citizens to weather events
- B. By maintaining storm watch personnel to help aid early detection of natural disasters.

2. Goal: To establish and enforce building and fire codes (planning and zoning).

Strategies:

- A. By updating the comprehensive planning and zoning ordinance
- B. By enforcing the Uniform Fire Code.

3. Goal: To improve disaster planning and training.

Strategies:

- A. By updating City Emergency Operations Plans
- B. By encouraging the use of NIMS by all emergency response personnel.

- 4. Goal: To better educate the public about procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.**

Strategies:

- A. By working at a personnel level to create personnel protection planning.
- B. By notifying the citizenry, by neighborhood if necessary, of localized hazards.

- 5. Goal: To work towards obtaining a more uniform system of communications among response personnel throughout the County.**

Strategies:

- A. By developing a communications language.
- B. By taking steps to guarantee equipment compatibility.

- 6. Goal: To be more proactive in order to reduce disaster damages.**

Strategies:

- A. By maintaining or building new safety structures that will prevent major damages.
- B. By making sure infrastructure systems are working correctly and efficiently.

Priority Goals as Established in the All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Process

The following goals have been determined as being the “priority listing” of goals for Sibley County hazard-mitigation planning efforts, as they are the forms of hazard events that have been deemed most likely to have a serious detrimental impact on Sibley County and all communities therein. These priority goals have been determined using the input of all Sibley County persons involved in the creation of this plan, using Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Environmental, and Economic (also referred to as “STAPLEE”) criteria. It is recommended that Sibley County pursue this set of goals for hazard mitigation as soon as possible. While all possible hazard events could have a serious negative impact on the County, due to the fact that they have not been determined as being priority hazards they are not included within this section of Sibley County Goals, Objectives, and Strategies. However, every hazard does have Actionable Mitigation steps that have been designed to minimize the impact of these hazards on the County, and these are listed and described under the “Actionable Mitigation Steps for All Hazards” section.

Projects submitted to FEMA for funding under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program Grant (PDM) are required to undergo a benefit cost analysis as part of the application. Applications for these grants are reviewed by the State Hazard Mitigation Officer at the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management before being submitted to FEMA.

1. Summer Storms, Specifically Tornadoes

How many jurisdictions named storms as a top three priority?	5
What was the average potential impact assigned on a scale of 1 through 3?	2
What was the average risk assessment assigned on a scale of 1 through 3?	1.35

County Goal

To prevent or minimize loss of life, injuries, and damage to property due to severe summer storms, particularly dangerous Tornadoes.

Objectives

The development of public education programs to teach people about the hazards posed by Tornadoes. Also, perform research into the pros and cons of burying power lines. These objectives will require only minimal staffing costs.

Strategies

Sibley County’s Department of Emergency Management will work with cities, towns and the regional development commission to develop educational material that can be presented to public via website and brochures. Brochures can be mailed to citizens in coordination with cities via utility billing or other public information mailings. Information would identify not only where to go for storm information (i.e. radio stations), but also where the nearest shelters are located. This information will be provided to citizens as a means to prevent damage or impacts

of hazards. This information will be developed and disseminated in the year 2007-2008. Afterwards, such information will be reviewed as a step in the annual monitoring and planning process.

2. Fires, Especially in Downtown Areas

How many jurisdictions named fires as a top three priority?	3
What was the average potential impact assigned on a scale of 1 through 3?	1.42
What was the average risk assessment assigned on a scale of 1 through 3?	1.14

County Goals

To prevent or minimize loss of life, injuries, and damage to property due to fire events in Sibley County.

Objectives

To encourage the countywide adoption of the Minnesota State Building Code and to continue funding training for public education performed by county fire departments. These goals will require only minimal staffing costs.

Strategies

The County will need to seek funding to explore the development and adoption of Minnesota State Building Code. The Department of Emergency Management at the county along with jurisdictions will discuss this issue during the first annual update meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for March/April of 2007. Adoption of such codes will lessen the vulnerability of new buildings, because measures such as structure of walls and fire apparatuses may be addressed early. Additionally, the County, along with city police, fire, public works and other appropriate units will collaborate on distributing educational material to the public. Information can be made available via websites, handouts at community or youth events and public presentations.

3. Hazardous Materials

How many jurisdictions named haz-mats as a top three priority?	5
What was the average potential impact assigned on a scale of 1 through 3?	1.42
What was the average risk assessment assigned on a scale of 1 through 3?	1.64

County Goals

To prevent or minimize loss of life, injuries, and damage to property due to hazardous material release/exposure events in Sibley County.

Objectives

To lower the risks of hazardous material accidents on roadways in Sibley County communities.

Strategies

Begin a serious dialogue about signage, traffic flow, and traffic inspection. We need to know in more detail exactly what types of hazardous materials are traveling through the county before we can mitigate and prepare for the impact of a hazardous materials spill. These strategies will require little money unless new signs are put up or major traffic changes are made.

4. Winter Storms

How many jurisdictions named winter storms as a top three priority?	4
--	----------

County Goals

To prevent or minimize loss of life, injuries, and damage to property due to severe winter storm events in Sibley County.

Objectives

To encourage the updating of snow removal plans and to begin planning what to do in the event of a prolonged winter event, including guaranteeing shelters in the event of a power outage.

Strategies

Each year jurisdictions review their snow removal plans. Some jurisdictions have conducted or simulated hazard mitigation responses. Based upon existing plans and practices, jurisdictions may exercise and assess its vulnerabilities to prolonged winter events. During the review process, the Hazard Mitigation Task Force can collectively inventory the county for safe shelter sites.

5. Flooding

County Goals

To prevent or minimize loss of life, injuries, and damage to property due to floods events in Sibley County.

Objectives

To encourage the mitigation of damage to structures in floodplains.

Strategies

The county and cities are encouraged to maintain bridges, levees, and stormwater drains to prevent damage to these structures/utilities or adjacent structures due to flooding.

The county and the cities of Arlington, Green Isle, Henderson and New Auburn are encouraged to coordinate planning with agencies that are responsible for community development to reduce damage to structures in the floodplains. Acquisition, relocation or flood-proofing the structures should be options explored as part of this planning. Results of the inspections of levees that protect structures should be reviewed by the county and applicable cities to ensure adequacy of the structure of the levees, warning systems, and flood response plans. The purchase of flood insurance should be promoted along with adoption of ordinances for construction in the floodplain.

Actionable Mitigation Steps for All Hazards

The following Actionable Mitigation Steps for All Hazards are expanded explanations and recommendations of the Actionable Mitigation Steps contained within each section of this document. In this section, some concepts of possible timeframes, funding resources, and responsible jurisdictions/agencies (and if at all possible staff positions) have been included as well. These recommended projects are also listed in prioritized order, as deemed by Region Nine staff using the general criteria that projects with the greatest forecasted impact on reducing or eliminating impacts should be undertaken first. A priority level of one to three has been assigned to each project, with one denoting that the project should be undertaken as soon as possible, and three denoting that the project should be implemented as time allows.

These steps are only recommendations, and it is the responsibility of Sibley County and cities thereof to implement these measures, as they deem appropriate. Specific steps may very well require significantly more research as to whether they would be appropriate and feasible steps for Sibley County communities to take in their hazard mitigation efforts. It is recommended that these communities continue to use the suggestions included herein to assist in conceptualizing additional steps and strategies to help prepare for hazard events. Additionally, many of the mitigation projects included in this section are applicable to several forms of hazard events beyond the category under which they are listed, and these may be considered as mitigation projects for any and all hazards for which Sibley County and cities thereof decide they may be applicable to.

Hazard: Winter Storms

- **Mitigation Project-** Utilize city ordinances to discourage placement of trees near power lines, particularly in larger Sibley County cities such as Gaylord and Winthrop. Winter storms, particularly ice storms, can easily down trees. Trees that topple near or on power lines present a serious secondary hazard in addition to the winter storm itself, and can also lead to power outages. Cities should utilize local ordinances to limit the locations of trees nearby to power lines.

Timeframe- This mitigation project could be undertaken immediately, and the amendments to city ordinances could be prepared, approved, and adopted relatively quickly.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- City governments would be responsible for the strategy, primarily planning/zoning department staff and the city councils.

Possible Funding- The primary costs associated with this mitigation project would be the staff time needed by the city planning staff to prepare or amend the ordinance, which would be the responsibility of the local city government.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Encourage the public to listen to local news sources, including television and radio broadcasts. These broadcasts can be extremely useful in disseminating information to residents in the event of a severe winter storm event, but are only effective if they are utilized. Reminders could be placed in city correspondence (such as water bills or newsletters) and on city web sites, if they are available.

Timeframe- This mitigation project can be implemented immediately, and should especially be encouraged during the winter storm season when events are most likely to occur.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Local cities would be largely responsible for implementation of this mitigation project. Local news sources may also be involved through use of their own broadcasts making note of their severe weather alert capabilities.

Possible Funding- This mitigation project can be done at minimal cost and would likely be funded primarily by local city governments.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Assure availability of information for non-English speaking residents throughout Sibley County, particularly in the City of Gaylord which has a significant Hispanic population. Language barriers for emergency information should be reduced or eliminated as much as possible so that all residents, regardless of language spoken, are able to get up-to-date information.

Timeframe- This mitigation project could be undertaken immediately and likely implemented within 3-6 months from inception. Efforts should be considered ongoing from that point forward.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Sibley County staff and city-level staff, particularly in the City of Gaylord, may be involved with this project. It may likely be assisted by County-level programs targeted at assisting minority populations.

Possible Funding- Funding for this project could come from any appropriate and available Sibley County or City of Gaylord funding, and may possibly be aided by grant opportunities as well, especially those meant to help minority populations.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Undertake community education and drills to prepare residents for severe weather storm events. This could take the form of public education classes/seminars, presentations to schools and community groups, and creation/distribution of informational literature regarding winter storm events.

Timeframe- Community education and drills could be undertaken immediately, if they are already not being conducted. If Sibley County communities are already performing these forms of public outreach, then they may consider increasing their events prior to and during the winter storm season when these hazard events are most likely to occur. These programs should be an ongoing effort within communities.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- City personnel would be largely responsible for the development, implementation, and continuation of these projects. Identified cities that may find the programs especially beneficial include Arlington, Gaylord, Gibbon, and New Auburn. Local fire department and police personnel may be involved with presentations and the development of informational material. The State of Minnesota has information available as well, which could likely be utilized by Sibley County officials for distribution to their local residents.

Possible Funding- Funding for these projects could come from local jurisdictions, grant sources for emergency preparedness and public education, and possibly contributions from local civic non-profit groups.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Education of key personnel in all Sibley County cities, particularly in Gaylord, Gibbon, and New Auburn. Community personnel that are likely to be involved with the immediate effects of a winter storm event (such as fire department and police department staff) should undergo continuing training to ensure that they have the newest and best knowledge and resources available to them so that they may be more effective in dealing with winter weather-related emergencies.

Timeframe- This mitigation project is already in place in many communities, but it should be ongoing for all of them. Education workshops, seminars, conferences, etc. are held occasionally and applicable training should be considered at all times.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- City fire department and police staff would be the most likely to be involved with ongoing education regarding flood hazard events. Sibley County officials may be involved as well. Some of the training may be conducted State of Minnesota agencies, federal agencies such as FEMA, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Possible Funding- Funding for education of key personnel can come from local city governments, from fire department of police department funds, and grants for emergency preparedness.

Priority Level- 3

Hazard: Summer Storms

- **Mitigation Project-** The identification/creation and use of adequate storm shelter facilities for the public (particularly in mobile home areas) in the City of Winthrop and the City of Arlington. Appropriate and safe shelter facilities should be designated for those that may otherwise lack access to them.

Timeframe- This project should be undertaken and completed as soon as possible, due to the fact that it is a serious gap in the preparedness of these communities to adequately deal with a summer storm event.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- The cities and owners of the mobile home parks (if applicable) would be responsible for undertaking and completing this project, and this may include city administration, public works personnel, and police/fire departments. They may be assisted with external partners of some sort if necessary. In the event that the affected mobile-home parks are in unincorporated areas, then responsibility may fall to County personnel.

Funding- Funding for the identification and/or creation of adequate storm shelter facilities would be the responsibility of the cities to fund by any means available to them that would be appropriate for use in this project.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Assure development, improvement, and maintenance of Early Warning Systems (sirens) in all Sibley County communities, particularly Winthrop, New Auburn, Arlington, Henderson, and Gibbon. Having these systems in place can provide a clearly understood message of imminent danger to residents within these communities, and may very well prevent injuries and even deaths by warning people to take shelter. Additional sirens where needed should be strongly considered.

Timeframe- The addition of early warning systems to communities can be a costly expenditure and may have to be tied in to a community budget, so this mitigation project may take 2-3 years to become fully operational. However, the sooner the early warning is in place the more likely it is to become a useful tool in protecting the community. In

communities in which siren systems are already in place, their maintenance should be carefully monitored to ensure their continued functioning.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- The city staff of the aforementioned cities, particularly City Councils, due to the likely significant cost of equipment, and the manufacturers/distributors of appropriate early warning systems, would have to be involved in this mitigation project.

Possible Funding- Costs for early warning systems would be paid out of funds available for use by the cities that decide to utilize this mitigation project.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Assure availability of information for non-English speaking residents throughout Sibley County, particularly in the City of Gaylord which has a significant Hispanic population. Language barriers for emergency information should be reduced or eliminated as much as possible so that all residents, regardless of language spoken, are able to get up-to-date information.

Timeframe- This mitigation project could be undertaken immediately and likely implemented within 3-6 months from inception. Efforts should be considered ongoing from that point forward.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Sibley County staff and city-level staff, particularly in the City of Gaylord, may be involved with this project. It may likely be assisted by County-level programs targeted at assisting minority populations.

Possible Funding- Funding for this project could come from any appropriate and available Sibley County or City of Gaylord funding, and may possibly be aided by grant opportunities as well, especially those meant to help minority populations.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Have assistance available for elderly residents, particularly in Gaylord. Methods to provide rapid assistance to elderly people who may need it in the event of a serious storm threat should be identified and utilized. This will ensure that elderly residents are aware of the threat and are more likely to be able to reach a safe location if necessary.

Timeframe- This mitigation project could be undertaken immediately and likely implemented within 3-6 months from inception. Efforts should be considered ongoing from that point forward.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Sibley County staff and city-level staff, particularly in the City of Gaylord, may be involved with this project. It may likely be assisted by County-level programs targeted at assisting elderly community members.

Possible Funding- Funding for this project could come from any appropriate and available Sibley County or City of Gaylord funding, and may possibly be aided by grant opportunities as well, especially those meant to help aging populations.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Specify the need for wind-resistant structures within building codes in the cities of Gaylord and New Auburn. Remodeled and new structures could incorporate wind-resistant designs and materials to make them less susceptible to the damaging effects of strong summer-storm winds, particularly Tornadoes.

Timeframe- Some communities currently provide such education, and this should be continued, but those that do not should undertake education on disaster preparedness in the near future. This may come in the form of community classes that may be offered annually or bi-annually, or other forms of educational outreach that communities may deem appropriate.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Cities would primarily be responsible for educational outreach regarding disaster preparedness for summer storms in their jurisdiction. Information and assistance may also come from Sibley County staff, the State of Minnesota, and Federal agencies such as FEMA.

Possible Funding- Funding for summer storm preparedness education could come from city funds as well as by grant money available for such projects, assuming the community qualifies to receive such grant funding.

Priority Level- 3

- **Mitigation Project-** Encourage the public to listen to local news sources, including television and radio broadcasts. These broadcasts can be extremely useful in disseminating information to residents in the event of a severe summer storm event, but are only effective if they are utilized. Reminders could be placed in city correspondence (such as water bills or newsletters) and on city web sites, if they are available.

Timeframe- This mitigation project can be implemented immediately, and should especially be encouraged during the summer storm season when events are most likely to occur.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Local cities would be largely responsible for implementation of this mitigation project. Local news sources may also be involved through use of their own broadcasts making note of their severe weather alert capabilities.

Possible Funding- This mitigation project can be done at minimal cost and would likely be funded primarily by local city governments.

Priority Level- 3

- **Mitigation Project-** Provide public outreach and education regarding disaster preparedness as it relates to summer storm events, particularly in the cities of Winthrop, Gaylord, New Auburn, Arlington, and Gibbon. This could be done in the form of public education and possibly community-wide drills. Providing such education would increase the public's knowledge of what to do prior to, during, and after a severe storm event, and help protect them from the hazard itself or secondary hazards associated with a summer storm event. Information can also be incorporated into school curriculum.

Timeframe- Some communities currently provide such education, and this should be continued, but those that do not should undertake education on disaster preparedness in the near future. This may come in the form of community classes that may be offered annually or bi-annually, or other forms of educational outreach that communities may deem appropriate.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Cities would primarily be responsible for educational outreach regarding disaster preparedness for summer storms in their jurisdiction. Information and assistance may also come from Sibley County staff, the State of Minnesota, and Federal agencies such as FEMA.

Possible Funding- Funding for summer storm preparedness education could come from city funds as well as by grant money available for such projects, assuming the community qualifies to receive such grant funding.

Priority Level- 3

Hazard: Flooding

- **Mitigation Project-** Focus on eliminating or limiting effects of a flood event on flood-prone areas, particularly flood-prone areas that have been identified in the Flooding hazard section of this document. By working to eliminate flood-prone areas before a flood occurs, the impact will not be as great at the time of the flood. Techniques to be considered are erosion control for rivers leading into the floodway along with acquisition, relocation, and flood-proofing.

Timeframe- This project should be considered as ongoing until all flood-prone areas have been mitigated to as much a degree as can be considered reasonable.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Could include Sibley County staff and all communities within the county that have areas that are particularly flood-prone, especially the residential areas that have been identified by various communities in the Flooding section.

Possible Funding- Funding for this mitigation project could come from any source available to Sibley County or communities thereof, including disaster mitigation grants.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** The City of Henderson should focus on maintaining existing levee structures, in addition to researching ways to strengthen bridges within and around the community. This will assist the community in preparation for a serious flood event.

Timeframe- This mitigation project, if not already in progress, should be undertaken as soon as possible and considered ongoing, particularly the maintenance of existing levee structures.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- The City of Henderson would be responsible for overseeing development and implementation of this mitigation project.

Possible Funding- Costs could be covered by any appropriate and available funds via the City of Henderson, and could possibly be subsidized by some form of loan or grant package available for flood preparation/mitigation.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Have items readily available for victims and responders in all Sibley County communities and areas, particularly the cities of Henderson, New Auburn, Green Isle, and Arlington. This may include ensuring stockpiling or access to stockpiles of sandbags and wall-building materials to erect barriers to flood waters. Educational material pertaining to flood events would be made available at public buildings. Flood responders should have proper equipment available to assist those who need help in times of a flood.

Timeframe- This mitigation strategy should be implemented soon. The extensive history of recent flooding in Sibley County demonstrates the need to begin stockpiling supplies as soon as possible.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Sibley County officials and city staff of communities within the county would be primarily responsible for the implementation of this strategy.

Possible Funding- Funding would likely be provided through county funding, local city government operating funds or through any funding available to counties or cities for such projects.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Education of key personnel throughout Sibley County, particularly in the City of Henderson, Green Isle, and Arlington. Community personnel that are likely to be involved with the immediate effects of a flooding event (such as fire department and police department staff) should undergo continuing training to ensure that they have the newest and best knowledge and resources available to them so that they may be more effective in dealing with flood emergencies.

Timeframe- This mitigation project may already be in place in some communities, but it should be an ongoing project for all of them. Education workshops, seminars, conferences, etc. are held occasionally and applicable training should be considered at all

times. This project could be undertaken in 2007 and reassessed annually to ensure its continued success.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- City fire department and police staff would be the most likely to be involved with ongoing education regarding flood hazard events. Sibley County Emergency Management officials may be involved as well. Some of the training may be conducted State of Minnesota agencies, federal agencies such as FEMA, and the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

Possible Funding- Funding for education of key personnel can come from local city governments, from fire department of police department funds, and grants for emergency preparedness.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Coordination of preparations for and response to a flood emergency with other agencies, including any applicable Sibley County, State of Minnesota, and federal agencies. Local resources alone are not adequate for a severe flood event of a prolonged duration.

Timeframe- Should be undertaken as soon as possible and should be considered as an ongoing project, particularly prior to annual flood seasons.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- Sibley County officials and cities within the county should be responsible for the implementation of this mitigation project.

Possible Funding- This mitigation project should not require extensive funding, and most of the costs would probably be incurred due to use of staff time from coordination activities. This may be funded by any proper means available to the responsible agencies.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Creation and maintenance of a communications plan for use in the event of a flood emergency. Sibley County, as well as all cities within the county, should have a communications plan in place to direct methods and lines of communications in the event of a flood emergency, such as points of contact for different agencies and assignments of radio frequencies for electronic communications devices.

Timeframe- This mitigation project could be prepared and implemented relatively rapidly, likely within a few months time.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- County emergency management officials, sheriff and law enforcement departments at the city and county levels, fire departments, and city public works may all be involved to some degree.

Possible Funding- Establishment of a communications plan would not be very costly, and would rely more on coordination with other local agencies, but any required funding could come from the cities or Sibley County.