

PART SEVEN: ACTION PLAN

Le Sueur 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. Le Sueur 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 Le Sueur 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.

Goal: Establish warning systems for use in the event of an emergency.

Strategies:

- A. Acquire, install, maintain, and utilize sirens to alert citizens to weather events.
- B. Train and maintain storm watch personnel to help aid early detection of possible natural disasters.

Goal: Establish and enforce building and fire codes through means of planning and zoning ordinances.

Strategies:

- A. Update the comprehensive planning and zoning ordinances.
- B. Adopt and enforce the Uniform Fire Code.

Goal: Improve upon current disaster planning and training.

Strategies:

- A. Update the City Emergency Operations Plans.
- B. Encourage the use of MIMS by all emergency response personnel.

Goal: Provide better education to the public regarding procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

Strategies:

- A. Work on a personal level to create personal protection planning.
- B. Notify the citizenry, by neighborhood if necessary, of localized hazards.

Goal: Work towards obtaining a more uniform system of communications among response personnel throughout the County.

Strategies:

- A. Develop a common communications language.
- B. Take steps to guarantee equipment compatibility.

Goal: Establish plans to reduce flood damage, wind damage, and other disasters from occurring.

Strategies:

- A. Maintain and create new flood dikes, levees, and other flood control devices.
- B. Make use of current technology to be proactive against disasters.
- C. Promote flood insurance.
- D. Advocate floodplain ordinances to reduce potential loss due to floods.
- E. Keep current on plans to replace or renovate the Highway 93 bridge with the intent of addressing flooding concerns into the design.

Priority Goals as Established in the Le Sueur County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan

The following goals have been determined as being the “priority listing” of goals for Le Sueur 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 Le Sueur County and all communities therein. These priority goals have been determined using the input of all Le Sueur 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 Le Sueur 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 Le Sueur 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 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 before being submitted to FEMA.

HAZARD: Summer storms, specifically tornadoes

Number of Jurisdictions Naming as a Top 3 Priority: 8

Goal

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

Objective

- The development of public education programs to teach people about the hazards posed by summer storms and tornadoes

Strategies

- Le Sueur County’s severe weather information will 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.
- Begin developing and disseminating information in 2006.
- Periodically review information as a step in the annual monitoring and planning process. 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.

HAZARD: Fires, especially in downtown areas

Number of Jurisdictions Naming as a Top 3 Priority: 8

Goal

To protect people, animals, and the built and natural environment from unwanted fire hazards.

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.
- To develop and distribute educational materials regarding fire hazards to the public.

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 2006. 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.
- 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.

Hazard: Hazardous Materials

Number of Jurisdictions Naming as a Top 3 Priority: 5

Goal

To prevent dangers to life, health, and property, as well as preventing economic losses due to exposure to hazardous material events.

Objective

- To begin a serious dialogue about the safety of our roads and highways. It should be determined whether better signage, labeling of hazardous material, or regulation of hazardous materials could mitigate a disaster.

Strategies

- These goals will require moderate amounts of money, higher if new signs are placed.

Hazard: Winter Storms

Number of Jurisdictions Naming as a Top 3 Priority: 4

Goal

To prevent or minimize dangers to life, health, property, and economic well being due to winter storm events.

Objectives

- To encourage the updating of snow removal plans in all Le Sueur County jurisdictions.
- 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.

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 Le Sueur 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 Le Sueur 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 Le Sueur County and cities thereof decide they may be applicable to.

Hazard: Winter Storms

- **Mitigation Project-** Improve the resistance of the City of Kilkenny to the secondary effects of winter storms. Kilkenny has identified secondary effects of winter storms, such as flooding and power outages, among their concerns. Public infrastructure improvements would help negate these effects.

Timeframe- The improvements to the Kilkenny infrastructure would take several years to complete, as they would likely have to be incorporated into a capital improvement plan for the city.

Responsible Agencies/Jurisdictions- Kilkenny city staff, including public works and city council, would have to work together to complete a plan and schedule for improvements. They would also have to coordinate with any other agencies, including Le Sueur County and State of Minnesota officials, which may need to be involved for any particular project.

Possible Funding- The City of Kilkenny would be responsible for funding infrastructure improvements within the community through any available and appropriate means available for their use.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Utilize city ordinances to discourage placement of trees near power lines. 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-** 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 these forms of public outreach are already being performed by Le Sueur County communities, 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 Cleveland, Kasota, Kilkenny,

and Montgomery. 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 Le Sueur 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. Community personnel that are likely to be involved with the immediate effects of a winter hazard 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 a winter storm emergency. This projects is especially applicable in the cities of Cleveland, Kasota, Kilkenny, and Montgomery.

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 year-round 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 winter hazard events. County officials may be involved as well. Some of the training is conducted by State of Minnesota agencies.

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-** Development of an Early Warning System (sirens) in communities that currently do not have such a system. The cities of Cleveland, New Prague, and Kasota have been identified as not currently having fully functional early warning systems. 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.

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.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- The cities of Cleveland, New Prague, and Kasota, as well as the manufacturers/distributors of appropriate early warning systems, would have to be involved in this mitigation project.

Funding- Costs for early warning systems would be paid out of funds available for use by the cities that decide to install and maintain them.

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** The identification/creation and use of adequate storm shelter facilities in Kilkenny. Kilkenny city staff has indicated that the community is currently lacking structures that provide proper protection from severe summer storm events. Safe shelters should be identified within the community and made available for everybody that needs them in a storm event, and if there are none or not enough available then such shelter should be created and utilized in times of need by Kilkenny residents.

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 Kilkenny to adequately deal with a summer storm event.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- The City of Kilkenny would be responsible for undertaking and completing this project.

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

Priority Level- 1

- **Mitigation Project-** Improve enforcement of the State Building Code. Ensuring that the Minnesota State Building Code is utilized and adhered to will help prevent structures from being overly vulnerable to the damaging effects of summer storm events. It has been identified that New Prague should consider this strategy to help prevent damage due to summer storms.

Timeframe- Increased enforcement of the Minnesota State Building Code can be implemented immediately and continued indefinitely.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- City of New Prague city staff, such as building inspector(s) or other appropriate staff, would be responsible for the implementation of this strategy.

Funding- Funding for this mitigation project would primarily come from the city government.

Priority Level- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Utilization of severe storm spotters network in all Le Sueur County cities. The severe storm spotters network are specially trained to spot and report severe summer storm activity, which is in turn used to provide warnings to specific areas of an impending severe summer storm threat.

Timeframe- Most cities already utilize severe storm spotters. This should be continued as needed indefinitely.

Responsible Jurisdictions/Agencies- It would be up to individual communities within Le Sueur County to decide how and when to utilize severe storm spotters.

Funding- Many severe storm spotters are fire department members or police officers, so funding for them may come out of applicable city funds.

Priority Level- 2

- **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- 2

- **Mitigation Project-** Provide education regarding disaster preparedness as it relates to summer storm events. 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. This should be of particular value to the cities of Elysian, Cleveland, Kasota, Kilkenny, Le Sueur, Montgomery, and New Prague.

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.