

PRESS RELEASES AND NEWS ARTICLES PUBLISHED

James W. Pitchford IPEM
Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency



215 South East Street, Carlinville, Illinois 62626

Contact: Jim Pitchford
(217) 248-3548

County Prepares For Natural Disasters

Carlinville, IL (September 5, 2017)—Macoupin County will update its plan to reduce the damages caused by natural hazards such as floods, tornadoes, snow storms, thunderstorms, and ice storms among others. The plan is called a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and the process to update it will be funded through a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

“Updating this plan will help us be better prepared before severe weather strikes. The goal is to reduce the harm to property and residents, said Jim Pitchford, Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator. When a federally declared disaster occurs, having an updated plan will help us receive federal funds, he added. Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans must be updated every five years.

The Macoupin County Hazard Mitigation Committee will hold the first meeting to update the plan on Thursday, September 14, at the Macoupin County Jail in the Board Room on the 2nd Floor located at 215 South East Street in Carlinville. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. The committee will meet periodically through the next several months to update this plan.

The Macoupin County Hazard Mitigation Committee has been created with representatives from each participating municipality along with technical partners and other stakeholders. Meetings of this committee will be conducted as working sessions so that any interested resident can attend and ask questions. The purpose of these working sessions is to gather and discuss information that will be used to update the plan.

“We already have an emergency response plan, but this mitigation plan is different because it focuses on ways to reduce and prevent damages before they occur,” added Pitchford.

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James W. Pitchford IPEM
Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency



215 South East Street, Carlinville, Illinois 62626

Contact: James Pitchford
(217) 248-3548

Reducing Damages Caused By Natural Hazards

Carlinville, IL (January 8, 2018)—The frequency and damages caused by severe storms and other natural hazards in Macoupin County will be discussed when the Macoupin County Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee meets Tuesday, January 23 at the Macoupin County Jail, 2nd Floor Board Room, 215 South East Street in Carlinville, beginning at 7 p.m. This Committee, comprised of County and municipal representatives, will meet over the next several months to update the Macoupin County All Hazards Mitigation Plan to reduce damages caused by natural and man-made hazards. All Committee Meetings are open to the public.

“The goal at this Committee Meeting is to begin identifying how often severe weather events occur and the kind of damages caused throughout our County. Based on this information we will begin to develop and update lists of activities and projects to reduce damages caused by these events,” said James Pitchford, Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator.

The focus of this effort is on natural hazards— severe thunderstorms with damaging winds or hail, tornadoes, snow and ice storms, floods, drought, excessive heat, earthquakes and dam failures.

Interested persons can provide input at these Macoupin County Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee meetings, or submit their comments and questions to their municipal or county representatives.

After a draft of the updated Plan is prepared, a public forum will be held where the draft Plan will be presented for review and comment. The draft updated Plan will be revised based on comments from the public and the state and federal government agencies. Following these revisions, the updated Plan will be presented for adoption at public meetings held by the County and at each of the participating municipalities.

“This updated Plan will be our best resource for determining how to prepare for storms and other natural hazards. After this updated Plan is completed, comprehensive information will be available in one document to help guide those who are making decisions about how to better protect Macoupin County residents,” added Pitchford.

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James W. Pitchford IPEM
Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency



215 South East Street, Carlinville, Illinois 62626

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: James Pitchford
(217) 248-3548

Projects to Reduce Damages Caused By Natural Disasters

Carlinville, IL (April 10, 2018)—Projects to prevent injuries and deaths while maintaining vital services for Macoupin County residents when severe storms hit will be discussed when the Macoupin County All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee meets at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1 at the Macoupin County Jail, 2nd Floor Board Room, 215 South East Street in Carlinville. Committee meetings are open to the public.

This Committee began work in September 2017 to update a Plan that will identify projects and activities to protect Macoupin County residents and property from storms and other natural disasters. This Plan, unlike all other emergency plans, is aimed at identifying projects and activities that can be taken before these disasters occur.

“Other emergency plans are directed at responding after a storm or natural disaster hits. With this Plan, we will identify actions that can reduce or eliminate damages caused by specific types of storms and other natural disasters for each participating municipality and unincorporated areas of the County before they occur,” said James Pitchford, Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator.

The municipalities of Benld, Brighton, Bunker Hill, Carlinville, Gillespie, Girard, Royal Lakes, Staunton, Virden, Wilsonville as well as Dorchester Township and the County have been participating in the planning process.

Building storm shelters, resolving drainage problems, providing back-up power supplies, retrofitting water supplies and other critical facilities to better withstand natural disasters are a few of the more frequently encountered mitigation projects in Illinois. Developing public information materials and conducting drainage studies are examples of other activities that might also be included in the All Hazards Mitigation Plan.

“Updating this Plan will help assure each participating municipality receives all of the money for which they are due when a catastrophic storm—such as a tornado or flood occurs. In addition, obtaining FEMA’s approval of our updated Plan will make all of the participants’ eligible to receive federal grant money for mitigation projects” added Pitchford.

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Protecting Public Health and Property In Macoupin County

Carlinville, IL (JULY 17, 2018)—Projects to protect residents and property from storms and other natural hazards will be discussed at the Macoupin County All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee meeting on August 7th at the Macoupin County Jail, 2nd Floor Board Room, 215 South East Street, in Carlinville. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. and is open to the public.

“Severe storms frequently damage buildings, crops, roads, and other critical infrastructure in this area. At least \$12.2 million in verified damages were caused by 34 severe weather and natural hazard events. There were likely more damages that were not documented. Consequently we are seeking to identify preventative steps that can reduce the dollar damages as well as protecting public health before severe weather strikes,” according to James Pitchford, Coordinator, Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency.

Projects identified by municipal representatives at this meeting will become part of the Macoupin County All Hazard Mitigation Plan. While the public has provided input on portions of the Plan, the entire Plan will be presented for public review and comment before it is submitted to the state and federal government for approval.

“A public forum will be conducted later this year for interested persons to review the Plan and ask questions of Committee Members. A two week public comment period will be established to accommodate interested persons who are unable to attend the forum. We want to make sure that anybody who is interested has an opportunity to review and comment on the draft Plan,” added Pitchford. Interested persons can submit questions and comments to the Committee members or directly to the Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency.

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Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency



215 South East Street, Carlinville, Illinois 62626

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: James Pitchford
(217) 248-3548

Public Forum on Plan to Reduce Storm Damage

Carlinville, IL (October 24, 2018) – The Macoupin County All Hazards Mitigation Plan outlining projects and activities to prevent injuries, deaths and property damage from severe storms and other types of severe weather will be available for review at a public forum on November 14th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Macoupin County Jail, 2nd Floor Board Room, 215 South East Street in Carlinville. Members from the Macoupin County All Hazards Mitigation Planning Committee will be available to discuss this Plan.

“Individuals can come and go at their convenience to review and comment on the Plan. If someone only has a few minutes to review the Plan, ask a question, or comment, they can easily do so at any time during the forum. This forum is designed to accommodate busy schedules. Unlike some conventional meetings, there are no formal presentations forcing attendees to wait before they can speak,” according to James Pitchford, Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator.

Over 125 projects and activities were identified to protect Macoupin County residents and property from storms and other natural disasters. This Plan, unlike all other emergency plans, is aimed at identifying projects and activities that can be taken before a natural disaster occurs. This Committee has been conducting working meetings open to the public since September 2017.

The municipalities of Benld, Brighton, Bunker Hill, Carlinville, Gillespie, Girard, Mount Olive, Royal Lakes, Staunton, Virden, and Wilsonville are participating in the planning process.

“Committee members helped identify projects that reflect the specific needs of each participating municipality. Storm damage information was used to develop specific suggestions for potential projects that can reduce harm to people and property within the County,” added Pitchford.

A public comment period will remain open until November 30. Comments can be directed to the Macoupin County Emergency Management Agency. Following the public comment period, any revisions that are needed will be made before the Plan is submitted to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency for approval.

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