

Governor's Office of Homeland Security And Emergency Preparedness State of Louisiana

JEFF LANDRY
GOVERNOR



JACQUES THIBODEAUX
DIRECTOR

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**MEDIA CONTACT:
Mike Steele
mike.steele@la.gov
225-788-0095**

Louisiana State Hazard Mitigation Plan Approved by FEMA

BATON ROUGE, La - FEMA recently approved the Louisiana State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan goes into effect March 21 and expires on March 20, 2029.

The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) led the effort for the state. State Hazard Mitigation plans are required by FEMA to qualify states to receive federal aid and grants. GOHSEP worked with Louisiana researchers at the LSU AgCenter LaHouse Research and Education Center, Louisiana State University, and the Center for Hazards Assessment, Response & Technology (UNO-CHART) at The University of New Orleans to develop the plan.

"Having a strong state hazard mitigation plan is critical to help Louisiana communities prepare and recover from disasters," shared Jeffrey Giering, Louisiana's State Hazard Mitigation Officer. "Partnerships with these universities are critical to our success and enable us to move the state's emergency preparedness plan forward."

LaHouse researchers conducted a natural hazards risk assessment for extreme heat and cold, drought, wildfire, wind, hail, lightning, tornado, flood, dam failure, sinkhole, and expansive soil – all hazards that affect Louisiana. The risk assessment found that potential losses from natural hazards could reach \$5 billion per year by 2050. Using new research techniques developed at LaHouse and LSU, the state has a more complete understanding of where risks are highest. "Our 2024 risk assessment allows us to look holistically at how different natural hazards affect different parts of the state. Understanding the \$5 billion annual risk is a key step in comprehensively reducing our risk in ways that are significant and equitable," noted Giering.

UNO-CHART supported the update of the Louisiana State Hazard Mitigation Plan with a focus on the following sections: the planning process; state mitigation capabilities; the overall

mitigation strategy; local coordination and capacity building; mitigation in action across the state, and plan review, evaluation, and implementation. Additionally, UNO-CHART updated the Statewide Community Rating System (CRS) Strategy and plans to update the current Statewide Repetitive Loss Strategy over the next year.

The next phase of the statewide planning effort is to share information about natural hazard risk and ways to reduce this risk throughout the state. Parishes throughout the state will be updating parish-level hazard mitigation plans and often use the Louisiana State Hazard Mitigation Plan as a baseline.

LaHouse Research and Education Center conducts research on strategies to reduce damage to the home from high-speed winds and floods. The facility allows visitors to explore exhibits that display resilient, sustainable and healthy housing techniques best suited for the Gulf of Mexico region. UNO-CHART is an applied social science hazards research center at The University of New Orleans that partners with and supports Louisiana communities in efforts to achieve disaster resilience with a focus on mitigation.

Find more tips on emergency preparedness, response and recovery on GOHSEP's Facebook and Twitter accounts. Download and subscribe to The GOHSEP Get A Game Plan Podcast. The Get A Game Plan App is another resource available to help you and your family prepare for any type emergency. You can download the Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide and find other information at www.getagameplan.org.

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