



# Florida SHMPoints

*Providing insightful mitigation news and information from around the State of Florida.*

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## Introducing: Mitigate FL

By: Laura Waterman

In early 2017, a bill was introduced to the Florida House of Representatives to create an interagency workgroup to discuss natural hazards and their current and potential impacts and to coordinate efforts to address the impacts of those natural hazards. The bill passed and became effective on July 1, 2017, creating Florida Statute 252.3655.

Since the intention and required membership of the workgroup is similar to that of other interagency mitigation groups, the existing groups will be combined with the new group to create one statewide mitigation group called Mitigate FL.

The State Hazard Mitigation Plan Advisory Team (SHMPAT) is one of the existing groups that will be combined into Mitigate FL. Its purpose is to advise the planners who develop the State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) for the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Mitigate FL will also incorporate another statewide mitigation group, called Silver Jackets, which is an interagency group aimed at bringing together resources from state and federal agencies for flood risk reduction and other mitigation projects.

In the past, the SHMPAT and Silver Jackets were separate and informal, and participation was only encouraged. By combining these groups with the newly required interagency workgroup, statute will now mandate the group, its meetings and agency participation. This will eliminate possible duplication of efforts and allow for better communication and stronger partnerships between state agencies regarding mitigation.

Several agencies will be required to join the Mitigate FL workgroup, including each agency within the executive branch of state government, each water management district and the Florida Public Service Commission. Liaisons from these agencies will be combined with other existing SHMPAT members, including liaisons from other state agencies, federal agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations and academic entities. Mitigate FL group will be required to meet quarterly to share information, leverage agency resources and coordinate ongoing mitigation efforts.

The statute identifies several natural hazards, including but not limited to: extreme heat, drought, wildfire, sea-level change, high tides, storm surge, saltwater intrusion, storm water runoff, flash floods, inland flooding and coastal flooding. The SHMP addresses these hazards, as well as other natural hazards such as tropical cyclones and geological hazards and technological and man-made hazards, such as biological, radiological, hazardous materials and terrorism hazards.

The bill allows for a dedicated FDEM staff member to coordinate these efforts and to prepare and submit annual reports starting in 2019. According to the new statute, the annual report must evaluate the implementation of the SHMP, the level of participation of the state agencies and strategize and prioritize ongoing efforts to address the impacts of natural hazards. This annual report must also be posted on each required agency's website.

The FDEM coordinator will be meeting with liaisons from each participating agency in the coming months to discuss our next steps. For more information, you can read the final approved bill here: [www.flsenate.gov](http://www.flsenate.gov) and the new statute here: [www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes).

### Questions? Contact:

Laura Waterman, Mitigate FL Coordinator, FDEM

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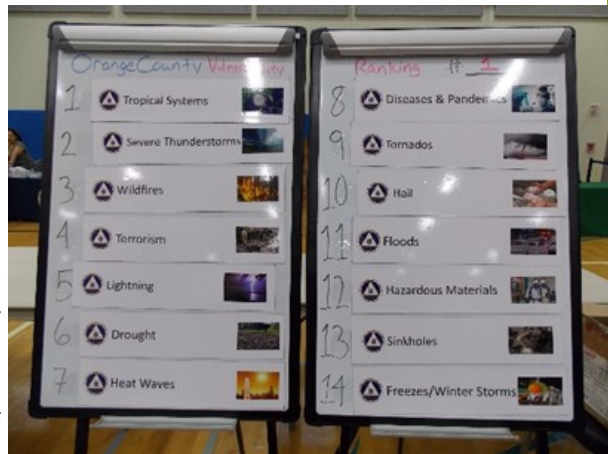
# Orange County Mitigation Outreach

By: Jason Taylor

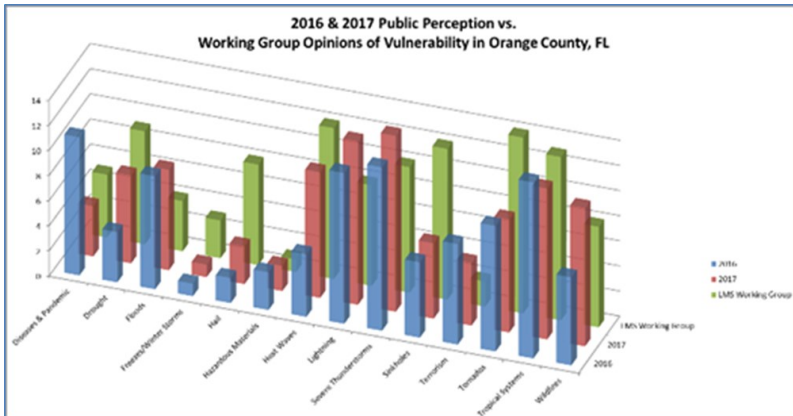
At the Orange County Hurricane Expo on June 3, 2017, Jason Taylor of the Orange County Office of Emergency Management conducted a game with attendees to rank hazards based on their perception of Orange County’s vulnerability.

The game was simple: each of the 14 hazards and sub-hazards that the Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group identified was placed on a large magnets. The participant matched each hazard to a number rank on magnetic boards, based on how they would prioritize the hazards. Each participant received a “prize” for playing the game, either a solar-powered light or a promotional writing pad. Even though Mr. Taylor was competing with other booths for participant attention, he had 31 responses in a 4-hour period!

Mr. Taylor also conducted the game at the Hurricane Expo last year, allowing him to compare responses and see how or if community perception had changed. Of specific interest was how opinions changed because of various hazards that affected the county within the last year, such as the Zika Virus outbreak, the Pulse Nightclub Shooting, an EF-0 tornado in the western part of the county, Hurricane Matthew and a very active Wildfire season exacerbated by Extreme Drought.



Some of his expectations were confirmed. For example, Wildfire, Heat Wave, and Drought were ranked higher



this year, while Disease & Pandemic was ranked lower. There were surprises though. Terrorism was ranked lower than last year, which is puzzling because the expo last year was just before the Pulse Nightclub Shooting in Orlando— at the time, the most severe mass shooting in our nation’s modern history. Mr. Taylor was also surprised by just how high Severe Thunderstorms and Lightning was ranked because while these events occur frequently during summer months, the loss of life and damages are minimal. His thoughts are that the general public does not fully understand the terms hazard vulnerability,

risk, probability, or severity, in the Emergency Management context. Mr. Taylor believes that it is the responsibility of each jurisdiction to provide residents with such information to improve the conversations we have about vulnerability, and ultimately mitigation.

Another observation is that after the game, participants want to know how their rankings compared to the LMS Working Group rankings. Mr. Taylor explains the LMS rankings and the top hazards: tornado, tropical systems, sinkholes and heat waves. He also has a sign-up sheet for those interested receiving information about LMS meetings and hazard updates.

The Orange County OEM plans to use this game at other outreach events in the future, such as community farmer’s markets and presentations in schools.

If you would like to learn more about Mr. Taylor’s hazard ranking game or findings, you can contact him at

[Jason.Taylor@ocfl.net](mailto:Jason.Taylor@ocfl.net).

# SFMO Post-Disaster Toolkit: Mutual Aid

By: Shannon Reiss

In the June 2017 edition of SHMPoints, an article from the State Floodplain Management Office (SFMO) discussed the Post-Disaster Toolkit for Floodplain Managers. One part of the toolkit will explain how local floodplain managers (FPMs) can use mutual aid to bring FPMs from other communities to assist with their post-disaster responsibilities.

When a flood disaster strikes, the post-environment of the disaster may be challenging for mitigation specialists, floodplain managers, homeowners and city and county officials. It is important for FPMs and emergency managers to coordinate to initiate actions and use specific tools for effective data collection following storm events. For example, establishing High Water Marks is a critical element in floodplain managers' responsibilities for establishing flood risk levels and for determining detailed Substantial Damages to structures after a flood event. When capturing High Water Marks, the FPMs must determine the maximum flood height, which is an important factor for assessing the extent of hidden damage to structures. It is also the basis for estimating the repair costs on affected structures that affects permitting procedures.

Local officials in communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) must determine whether proposed work qualifies as a substantial improvement or a repair of substantial damage (normally referred to as an SI/SD Determination). This determination is required prior to permitting work authorizing owners and contractors to conduct repairs to structures following a natural disaster, or during non-disaster times. If work on a building constitutes SI/SD, then the structure must be brought into compliance with NFIP requirements, local flood ordinances, and the Florida Building Code, which by January 1, 2018 will require new structures and those that are substantially improved to be elevated so the lowest floor is one foot above the base flood elevation (freeboard).

Following a disaster, many forms of Federal public funding assistance for disaster response activities, especially those funded by FEMA programs authorized by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288) as amended. When state and local resources are insufficient to respond to an emergency or major disaster, The Stafford Act authorizes federal assistance through a Presidential Disaster and/or Emergency Declaration.

States may coordinate amongst themselves during declared disasters in order to achieve a fast and efficient recovery process. A highly efficient and effective process for coordination in Florida is the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (SMAA), which is an interagency agreement developed to enable communities statewide to provide resources that will aid the recovery of other communities adversely affected by storms or disasters. Mutual aid agreements and memoranda of understanding are essential components of emergency management planning, response and recovery operations. These agreements provide a vehicle for reciprocal emergency aid and assistance during and following emergencies or disasters. They can increase available resources and improve response and recovery efforts.

Mutual aid has not been used much in the past to provide floodplain management assistance, but the SFMO hopes that this toolkit will help local FPMs to understand and be able to use this type of mutual aid to their benefit after a flood disaster.

When communities affected by flood disasters need assistance, the SFMO is available to provide a wealth of knowledge and information that can help floodplain managers and the emergency management community take action to help property owners and communities become more flood resilient.

**To contact the SFMO Helpline:**

(850) 815-4556

[floods@em.myflorida.com](mailto:floods@em.myflorida.com)

## HAZUS-MH Training coming to Florida!

The Mitigation Planning Unit at FDEM is working with the HAZUS FL User Group to bring HAZUS-MH trainings to Florida. We are aiming to hold these classes between January and June of 2018.

Keep an eye out for further announcements!

For more information contact the  
Mitigation Planning Unit Manager, Melissa Schloss at:  
[Melissa.Schloss@em.myflorida.com](mailto:Melissa.Schloss@em.myflorida.com)

## Mitigating the Threat of Active Shooters

By: Rodney Andreasen

The term Active Shooter has been synonymous with active killers. Many believe that these incidents cannot be mitigated with any success; however, this is not the case. A mixture of policy measures, training initiatives and physical applications can mitigate and possibly even prevent active shooter incidents.

The first step is to develop a policy regarding the measures your organization wants its employees to apply before, during, and after an incident occurs. These policies should be reinforced during annual trainings and should become like second nature for personnel.

The second step is the consistent and thorough application of training that explains the actions your organization wants its employees to take during an incident. However, simply having a policy that identifies one method to mitigate active shooters will not be adequate. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recommends a combination of actions to provide a “tool-kit” of applicable actions that can be used to mitigate and negate violence against employees. The Run – Hide – Fight continuum has gained the most popularity with DHS and many other organizations. To be truly effective though, training must be both an in-depth learning experience, as well as one that allows for hands-on application. Without this dual track training, employees will not be able to build the muscle memory required to apply the techniques in a stress-induced situation, such as an active shooter incident.

The third and final step is to secure the physical structure of your organization. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) uses natural surveillance, natural access control, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance to create safe spaces. A CPTED trained individual can conduct a survey and provide a report to assist in the application of the theory. By incorporating CPTED into your organization, the active shooter threat can be mitigated.

Developing an attitude of “it will never happen here,” is not a plan, but instead a hope that cannot be defended by those who believe it will never happen. Like taking steps to mitigate flooding and other natural hazards in the state of Florida, an active shooter incident is a hazard we can take action against to reduce the threat, with very little cost, and a large payoff, in something that is priceless, a life.

For more information, visit: <https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>  
Or contact Rodney Andreasen at [randreasen@jacksoncountyfl.com](mailto:randreasen@jacksoncountyfl.com).



# The Grass is Greener in EM

By: Kayley Stutson

In an effort to counter the rapid and continual development of urban areas and infrastructure, techniques that both mitigate against hazard risks and sustain the environment have been explored, studied, and attempted. County and local governments have implemented several 'green' project initiatives that have already proven to be successful long-term. The use of rain gardens in flood control and green roofs for heat control is becoming a popular trend in the age of green infrastructure, playing off best management practices (BMP) and low impact development (LID) models.

Often constructed nearby roof drain pipes (with or without rainwater tanks), rain gardens are designed as drainage reservoirs with a capacity to permeate incoming water through several layers of soil or gravel located underneath the plantings' surfaces. During heavier rain events French drains help to usher excess storm water to a location with proper capabilities, thus reducing peak storm water discharge. The reduction in water discharge prolongs hydraulic lag time, allows for groundwater recharge and mimics the natural water cycle otherwise displaced by urban development. Rain gardens eliminate watering costs, labor and equipment, trap sediments, fertilizers, and pollutants and provide shelter to native habitats and populations.

Rain gardens are advantageous for many reasons: they improve water quality by filtering runoff, provide localized flood control, are aesthetically pleasing and provide native planting capabilities. They also encourage wildlife and biodiversity, tie together buildings and surrounding environments in appealing and environmentally-savvy ways and provide noteworthy solutions to key environmental dilemmas. Other rain garden benefits include pollution control, flooding protection, habitat creation and water conservation.

On the other hand, green roofs help to reduce heat from roof surfaces and surrounding air and provide shade. Because buildings and roads have replaced open land and vegetation, populated areas become warmer than their rural surroundings to form an "island" of heat. Evapotranspiration and shade provided by plants helps to counter Urban Heat Island Effect brought about by an excess of reflective and impermeable surfaces in cities and suburbs. The increase in air temperature heightens the demand for air conditioning and cooling methods, ultimately perpetuating a cycle of energy intake. Consider green roofs as heat-absorbent-gardens. Selected vegetation can also vary, with intensive roof systems containing a wide variety of plant species and extensive roof systems containing herbs, mosses and grasses.

The benefits of a green roof extend far beyond its capacity to remove surface heat. They include prevention of rainfall runoff, filtering of rainwater pollutants, saving building energy and associated costs, providing wildlife habitats, providing natural insulation during colder months and reduction of air pollution.

## Meet Amy!

FDEM welcomes Amy Peterson to the Bureau of Mitigation as its newest planner. Amy received her undergraduate degree from FSU in International Affairs and Political Science. She is currently working towards her Masters in Emergency Management Leadership.

Prior to moving to Tallahassee, Amy grew up in West Palm Beach. It was there that she volunteered with the American Red Cross during the 2004 and 2005 Hurricane seasons, which sparked her interest in Emergency Management. Amy looks forward to furthering her understanding of hazard mitigation and the many grant opportunities available. When not working, Amy loves to go hiking, paddle boarding or spend the day at the barn.



## Need More Information?

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## The Bureau of Mitigation

Mitigation is an integral part of the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Mitigation actions reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Due to Florida's weather, geography, and miles of coastline the state is highly vulnerable to disasters. Disasters can be very costly to both the citizens and government.

Under the direction of Division Director Bryan W. Koon and State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Miles E. Anderson, the Bureau of Mitigation administers several federal mitigation grant programs including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program. The Bureau also administers a state funded mitigation program called the Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program.

If you would like to know more about mitigation in Florida please visit: [www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation](http://www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation).

# 2017 PDM/FMA Cycle

All applications must be submitted to FDEM via the eGrants application system on or before **October 2, 2017 by 5:00 PM EST.**

For fact sheets, please see the PDM and FMA pages on our website:

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/Mitigation/index.htm>

For more information contact the Project Managers:

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