

## Local News

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### Mitigation plan is set for review

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MIFFLINTOWN - A draft of Juniata County's hazardous mitigation plan was released Friday, commissioners announced Tuesday at their meeting.

The top three of the 15 identified hazards in Juniata County are flooding, severe winter weather and drought, according to the plan.

Through the plan, county commissioners and municipal officials will work to reduce or eliminate long-term risks to life and property that result from natural and man-made hazardous events, according to a press release from the county commissioners.

The plan also makes the county eligible for federal disaster funding, said Troy D. Truax, of Delta Development Group Inc.

"All the hard work you've done as commissioners is paying off," Truax said of the plan.

Commissioner Chairman Jeffrey Zimmerman asked if municipalities would receive funding if they chose not to participate and a disaster occurred.

Truax replied that some disaster funds will be available to them, but pre-disaster funds may be provided through the plan to municipalities that participate. The hazardous mitigation plan is based on disasters that happened in the past, he said.

The county and its participating municipalities should review the plan annually; and every five years, the government requires the plan to be updated, Truax said.

Commissioner Dale Shelley expressed concern that many municipalities may choose not participate in the plan.

"Unless someone works with the municipalities, (the plan) will sit on their desk, and nothing's done," Shelley said.

Truax suggested the county's Emergency Services Department, whose staff worked closely with the project, prod the municipalities to implement the plan.

The hazardous mitigation plan will be available for public comment on the county's Web site, [www.co.juniata.pa.us](http://www.co.juniata.pa.us), until Sept. 5. Between this time, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will review the draft to look for any deficiencies, Truax said.

By August, the commissioners should have comments on the draft from P.E.M.A. and F.E.M.A., Truax said. When the county and at least one municipality adopt the final draft, F.E.M.A. Region 3 will recognize the plan, he said. Then the county and municipalities may apply for grants to implement the mitigation strategies outlined in the plan, the release states.

After the public comment period, the plan is subject to adoption at an open public meeting, according to the release. Notification of the time, date and location of the meeting will be announced at a later date, the release states.

The plan was funded by a pre-disaster mitigation grant issued by F.E.M.A., according to the release.

In other business, the commissioners tabled a motion for a bid opening for the replacement of the heating and cooling system and windows in the Juniata County Library.

Commissioner Teresa O'Neal said there was confusion on several issues with the project. The county will revise the project and re-advertise the bid, she said.

The commissioners will meet at 10 a.m. Tuesday at the Bousum Building, Main Street in Mifflintown.

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