

## For Immediate Release

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### Prepare For Action!

#### *Task Force To Set Sights On Mitigation Activities For Sangamon County*

**Springfield, IL February 11, 2008** — The Sangamon County Multi-jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Task Force is in full swing and is preparing to transform goals to actions. The fourth meeting of the task force will be held February 13, 2008 at 5:30pm in the Jerome Municipal Center located at 2901 Leonard Street in Springfield, IL. This meeting location is different from previous meetings, so please call the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission office at 535-3110 for questions or directions. The public is encouraged and welcome to attend.

Representatives from Auburn, Buffalo, Cantrall, Chatham, Curran, Dawson, Divernon, Grandview, Illiopolis, Jerome, New Berlin, Pawnee, Pleasant Plains, Riverton, Rochester, Sherman, Southern View, Springfield, Thayer, Williamsville and Sangamon County will attend the fourth meeting of the Sangamon County Multi-jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan Task Force. Next on their agenda is to formulate mitigation activities based on the goals and objectives that were created at the January meeting. The goals drafted reflect the desire of the task force to 1) protect the lives, health & safety of Sangamon County residents, 2) improve communication and cooperation between government, residents, & the private sector, 3) protect infrastructure, and 4) incorporate natural hazard mitigation into community plans and regulations.

At the fourth meeting, community representatives and other task force members will generate mitigation activity ideas to present to their respective community leaders. The purpose will be to determine which mitigation actions will be undertaken and how these actions will be implemented. Some examples of mitigation activities include creating safe rooms in new public facilities, adopting building codes, and promoting the use of weather radios. Mitigation actions will be based on nine hazards that include: dam failure, drought, earthquakes, extreme heat, floods, mine subsidence, severe storms, tornados and winter storms. For more information on each hazard, its risk assessment and goals generated from the January meeting please log on to <http://co.sangamon.il.us/NHMP>.

The Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission was awarded a contract for a Hazard Mitigation Planning grant in the amount of \$46,167 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This grant will fund 75% of the cost of plan preparation. The Regional Planning Commission will facilitate development of the plan and Sangamon County will provide the remaining 25% through staff involvement.

"The development and maintenance of a Hazard Mitigation Plan is important to the welfare of all of us in Sangamon County," said Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Norm Sims. "Any one of us could be affected by a future natural disaster, and it is so important for the citizens of Sangamon County to get involved in this effort any way they can."

The advantages of having a hazard mitigation plan include protecting citizens and property from the effects of hazards such as tornadoes, flooding and winter storms. Any community that has a hazard mitigation plan that is compliant with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 is eligible for hazard mitigation grant money from FEMA. The purpose of this plan is to reduce the loss of life and

property due to natural disasters by identifying mitigation measures that can be implemented prior to a disaster.

For more information call Linda Wheeland at *(217) 535-3110* or email [HazardPlan@co.sangamon.il.us](mailto:HazardPlan@co.sangamon.il.us)

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