



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Caldwell County wins grant to help protect citizens, property from natural disasters**

Caldwell County recently secured a \$100,000 grant from the Texas General Land Office to update its Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The plan will include numerous recommendations for important projects and life-saving equipment to help reduce risks to property and life caused by natural disasters.

"The possible effects of a natural disaster often impact every aspect of the community with devastating consequences," Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden said. "Having a hazard mitigation plan in place helps communities identify risks, develop strategies to reduce risk, and get grant funding for mitigation projects. The county's last hazard mitigation plan led to the ongoing project to build the Caldwell County Evacuation Center, which broke ground in December."

The plan will include the County, as well as the Cities of Lockhart, Luling, and Martindale, along with Lockhart ISD, Luling ISD, Prairie Lea ISD, the five Emergency Services Districts, and local water districts.

Though GLO approves the grant, FEMA is responsible for the funding. FEMA emphasizes pre-hazard mitigation planning and believes this program invests in the community's future safety and sustainability.

Its critical significance includes protecting public safety and preventing loss of life, reducing harm to current and future development, and minimizing damage to a community's unique economic, cultural, and environmental assets. Once FEMA approves the Plan and it is adopted locally, the County and all other jurisdictions will have fulfilled the eligibility requirements for future FEMA funding.

The County has engaged Langford Community Management Services, Inc. (LCMS) to guide the process, perform research and technical planning, and submit the final Plan to FEMA. Langford is dedicated to developing the Plan following FEMA standards and guidelines.

"The local focus considers a wide array of natural threats and how they relate to community vulnerabilities. We will examine everything from flooding to hurricanes, tropical storms, severe storms, tornadoes, hail, lightning, drought, wildfires, extreme heat, lightning strikes, and winter storms," said Judy Langford, President of LCMS.

The plan will incorporate input from a CORE Planning team and other Stakeholders. Other participants will be invited to help develop specific mitigation strategies. Public meetings about the updated plan will take place to identify residents' top concerns.

A survey is available to the public on the County's website and at public facilities such as libraries, city halls, and the Caldwell County Courthouse.

Judge Haden expressed his hope that residents will engage in the planning process and provide feedback on what they consider essential.

"This process offers an opportunity for open dialogue regarding what needs to be reinforced to enhance our County and communities' resilience to natural disasters," he added.