

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
PUBLIC NOTICE  
REGARDING A LIMITED EXCEPTION FOR RETROCATIVE APPROVALS UNDER  
FEMA'S HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (HMGP) FOR  
LOUISIANA DR-1603 AND DR-1607

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is issuing this public notice to inform property owners in Louisiana of a limited exception for retroactive approvals under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).

In the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, some individual property owners and communities in the affected areas of Louisiana proactively undertook hazard mitigation activities in an effort to recover from the damages and mitigate at-risk properties against future damage. Under normal HMGP requirements, projects initiated by property owners prior to FEMA approval typically are not eligible for funding. However, the unique circumstances of the 2005 disasters have prompted FEMA to allow initiated and completed property-owner actions, implemented in the course of repair activities on structures damaged by the events, to be eligible for grant consideration.

This limited exception allows residential, commercial, public and private nonprofit structures damaged by either hurricanes Katrina or Rita to be considered for retroactive funding. To remain eligible for retroactive funding under the exception, a property owner's mitigation activities must be initiated or completed by March 16, 2008. "Initiated" is defined as actual physical work such as groundbreaking, demolition or construction of a raised foundation. Those residential, commercial and non-historic public and nonprofit facilities that have not initiated or completed work by March 16, 2008 still remain eligible for funding. However, in order to receive funding, those projects must be reviewed under standard Federal environmental and historic preservation compliance requirements and be approved by FEMA before work can be initiated. Documentation is required to verify eligibility.

Funding availability under the exception for projects that involve historic properties is contingent upon who owns the property. Historic properties, in general, are defined as buildings, structures, districts, and archaeological sites which are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Historic properties owned by public entities and private nonprofit organizations will not qualify for retroactive funding if the project was not initiated or completed before the January 16, 2008 announcement of the exception. However, historic properties owned by private or commercial entities may still be eligible for HMGP grant consideration under the exception if a project is initiated or completed by March 16, 2008.

Due to the large number of historic properties and historic districts located throughout Louisiana, FEMA will assist local and national preservation organizations in providing information to the public on how they can use this funding while protecting the historic character of their historic properties. Historic preservation tools, techniques and approaches will be available through various organizations, including the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and local preservation groups such as the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans and local historic district regulatory authorities.

Property owners in Louisiana desiring additional information concerning the limited exception for retroactive approvals under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and historic property

resource information should visit [www.fema.gov/gcro](http://www.fema.gov/gcro) or mail requests to FEMA, Environmental/Historic Preservation Office, 1 Seine Court, New Orleans, LA 70114.