Don’t Just Respond and Replace: Respond, Replace, and Make Resilient!

The Association of State Floodplain Managers encourages those affected by Sandy to take steps now to reduce losses from this storm – and the storms of the future!

MADISON WI, Oct. 31, 2012 – The Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) strongly encourages local, state, and federal leaders throughout the regions affected by Sandy to ensure that recovery efforts and reconstruction investments result in more resilient communities. “Once families and businesses stabilize their own safety and emergency needs, attention quickly pivots toward recovery and rebuilding,” said Chad Berginnis, ASFPM Executive Director. “This is the time for those affected by Sandy to take steps to reduce property loss from this storm – and to better prepare for future disasters.”

Communities are reminded that flooding from Sandy may persist days or even weeks in some areas as conditions are exacerbated by continued rainfall, coastal tides, and snowmelt. However, as floodwaters recede and efforts turn toward the recovery phase, the following suggestions are intended to help you determine your next steps.

Property Damage
ASFPM urges those who have experienced property damage and intend to repair or rebuild to contact their local floodplain administrator and building department immediately. Inspections and assessments of damage must be conducted prior to rebuilding. This important step helps assure that property owners have access to needed technical assistance and that reconstruction complies with local permitting, codes, and standards.

Rebuilding for Resilience
Following disasters of this magnitude, funds may be available to help property owners rebuild their homes and businesses on higher ground or elevate to prevent damage in future floods, among other changes to ensure that the structure can better weather disasters in the future and reduce the misery and suffering that accompany these events. Programs through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) include the National Flood Insurance Program—Increased Cost of Compliance, which makes funds available to support rebuilding higher and stronger if your structure is substantially damaged.

Hazard Mitigation
FEMA also administers important hazard mitigation programs designed to assist states and communities following major disasters like Sandy. Federal and industry studies have confirmed that for every dollar invested in flood hazard mitigation, approximately five dollars is saved in disaster payouts and economic disruption.

“Storms like Sandy, Irene, and other disasters the nation has faced in recent years serve to underscore the importance of hazard mitigation,” Berginnis noted. “The inclination is to repair and to get back to normal as soon as possible, but if we pause and think about how we can rebuild in a better way, there is an opportunity to be better prepared for the disasters to come and to make our communities sustainable.”

For more information, please visit ASFPM at http://www.floods.org. The Association of State Floodplain Managers is an organization of professionals involved in floodplain management, flood hazard mitigation, the National Flood Insurance Program, and flood preparedness, warning and recovery.

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Media Contact: Ingrid Danler, CFM, ASFPM Associate Director of Operations, Ingrid@floods.org, 847-344-4327