

Rice County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan

RICE COUNTY
Minnesota



Rice County Minnesota

2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan

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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Hazard Mitigation Planning in Minnesota

Hazard mitigation planning refers to any sustained action to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from natural disasters. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has made reducing hazards one of its primary goals, and a primary mechanism in achieving this goal is both the hazard mitigation planning process and the subsequent implementation of resulting projects, measures, and policies (FEMA, 2023b).

Since 1980, damages from natural disasters in the U.S. have exceeded \$2.72 trillion. 2023 saw a record 28 separate billion-dollar weather and climate disaster events in the United States, breaking the previous record of 22 events set in 2020. Minnesota alone has experienced 59 separate billion-dollar disasters since 1980 (NCEI, 2024). Hazard mitigation planning is an effective process to prepare communities and lessen the impact of loss of life and property from future disasters. Although mitigation efforts will not eliminate all disasters, government at all levels should strive to be as prepared as possible for a disaster for the well-being of its residents.

The Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) is a requirement of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The development of a local government plan is required to maintain eligibility for federal hazard mitigation grant funding programs. To be eligible for future mitigation funds, communities must adopt an HMP.

Researchers at the National Institute of Building Sciences looked at the results of 23 years of federally funded mitigation grants provided by FEMA, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Their findings revealed that for every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation funding in the nation, \$6 is saved in future disaster costs (Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council, 2019).

Rice County is vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards that threaten the loss of life and property. Hazards such as tornadoes, flooding, wildfires, blizzards, straight-line winds, and droughts can potentially inflict vast economic loss and personal hardship.

This planning document is accompanied by a website that allows for easy stakeholder and community engagement, as well as interactive maps, dashboards, and infographics.

A broad overview of this companion website's features is as follows:

- Homepage (featuring Declared Disasters dashboard, feedback forms, links to Rice County Emergency Management website, etc.)
- County Profile
- Risk Assessment & Natural Hazard Profiles
- Goals & Implementation
- Climate Change

[*Rice County HMP Website*](#)

1.1.1 Scope

U-Spatial, University of Minnesota, was contracted by Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management using FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) grant funds to work with Rice County Emergency Management to facilitate an update to the 2019 Rice County HMP. U-Spatial brings extensive geographic data analysis skills and hazard risk assessment expertise to the process. U-Spatial also employed the services of Hundrieser Consulting LLC for county and stakeholder outreach as well as mitigation action development related to this plan.

This HMP evaluates and prioritizes the major natural hazards affecting Rice County as determined by frequency of event, economic impact, deaths, and injuries. Mitigation recommendations are based on input from state and local agencies, the public, and national best practices.

This is a multi-jurisdictional plan that covers Rice County, including the cities of Dennison, Dundas, Faribault, Lonsdale, Morristown, Nerstrand, and Northfield. The Rice County mitigation activities identified in this plan also incorporate the concerns and needs of townships, school districts, and other participating entities.

Members from each of these jurisdictions actively participated in the planning process by assisting with public outreach, attending planning team meetings, providing local information, identifying mitigation actions, and reviewing the plan document (see Appendix C). The information in these forms was used to help identify mitigation actions for local implementation (see also Section 2.2). Each jurisdiction will adopt the plan by resolution after the plan is approved by FEMA. County and local city resolutions will be added by Rice County after final approval by FEMA (see Appendix B).

Rice County has specified the following goals for this plan update:

- Include more recent data documenting the critical infrastructure and hazards faced by Rice County.
- Reformat and reorganize the plan to reflect definitions of hazards as expressed in the 2024 Minnesota State Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Reflect current hazard mitigation priorities in Rice County.
- Encourage recipients and sub-recipients of hazard mitigation grants to consider climate change adaptation, resiliency, and equity in their planning efforts.

1.1.2 Hazard Mitigation Definition

Hazard mitigation may be defined as any action taken to eliminate or reduce the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. The benefits of hazard mitigation planning include the following:

- saving lives, protecting the health of the public, and reducing injuries
- preventing or reducing property damage
- reducing economic losses
- minimizing social dislocation and stress
- reducing agricultural losses
- maintaining critical facilities in functioning order

- protecting infrastructure from damage
- protecting mental health
- reducing legal liability of government and public officials

1.2 State Administration of Mitigation Grants

FEMA currently has two mitigation grant programs that the State of Minnesota administers: the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program. The HMGP and FMA programs are administered through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Homeland Security Emergency Management (HSEM) Division. All applicants must have or be covered under an approved hazard mitigation plan. Eligible applicants include state and local governments, certain private non-profit organizations or institutions, and tribal communities.

Section 2 – Public Planning Process

2.1 Planning Team Information

The Rice County HMP planning team is headed by the Rice County emergency manager, who is the primary point of contact. Planning team members include representatives from public and governmental sectors. Table 1 identifies the planning team individuals and organizations that participated in virtual planning team meetings during the plan update process.

Note: Table 1 is not an exhaustive list of stakeholder participation in the Rice County HMP update. Additional participation by jurisdictional and other agency representatives is documented in Table 3 of this section, as well as in Section 3.4, Appendix C, and Appendix G. The meeting summaries in Appendix F provide a comprehensive overview of each session. This includes a complete list of invited planning team stakeholders and information on other significant opportunities for engagement during the plan update.

[Find the planning team members on the Rice County HMP website](#)

Table 1. Hazard Mitigation Planning (HMP) Team

Name	Agency/Organization	Participant Title
Joseph Johnson	Rice County Emergency Management	Emergency Management Director
Jesse Thomas	Rice County Sheriff	Sheriff
Josh Schoen	Rice County	County Assessor
Samantha Schwartz	Rice County Facilities	Project Manager
Martha Williams	Rice County Public Health	EP Coordinator
Allan Klug	Rice County	IT Manager
Julie Runkel	Rice County Environmental Services	Director
Jeremy Edwards	Rice County Environmental Services	Senior Planner
Dennis Luebbe	Rice County Highway Dept.	County Engineer
Debra Purfeerst	Rice County Public Health	Director
Martha Kykes	Rice County Public Health	Emergency Preparedness Coordinator/Health Educator
Sara Folsted	Rice County	County Administrator
Alan Klug	Rice County IT	IT Manager
Jessica Page	City of Dennison	Clerk
Jeffrey Flaten	City of Dennison	Mayor
Todd Hanson	City of Dundas Police Dept.	Chief of Police
Dustin Dienst	City of Faribault Fire Dept.	Fire Chief
Joel Erickson	City of Lonsdale	City Administrator
Ellen Judd	City of Morristown	City Administrator
Frances Boehning	City of Nerstrand	City Clerk

Name	Agency/Organization	Participant Title
Jeanette Baalson	City of Nerstrand	Deputy Clerk
P.T. Haider	City of Northfield PD	Deputy Chief of Police
Dennis Bennett	City of Northfield	Public Works Director/City Engineer
Thomas Hart	Bridgewater Township	Supervisor
Diane Johnson	Wheatland Township	Supervisor
Kevin Babcock	Tri-City United Schools	Superintendent
Zita Toth	St. Olaf College	Associate Director of Public Safety
Jeff Favreau	St. Olaf College	Public Safety Director
Gabriel McCall	South Central College	Director of Facilities
Ritu Raju	South Central College	President
Blake Held	Carleton College	Director of Security Services
Kain Smith	ISD 656	Director of Buildings & Grounds/Health & Safety
Jav Jodsaas	ISD2905	Facilities Director
Mark Winter	WEM School District	Superintendent
Matt Krenik,	Faribault Public Schools	Health and Safety Manager
Sandi Gerdes	Laura Baker Services Association	Executive Director
Penny Hillermann	Laura Baker Services Association	Asst. Program Director
Anika Rychner	Community Action Center	Senior Director
Larry Alderks	Bridgewater	Supervisor
Chad Hanson	MnDOT	Emergency Management Coordinator
Tim Zierden	MnDOT	Highway Maintenance Operations Superintendent
Dan Meier	Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric	Operations Manager
Jenny Larson	Three Rivers Community Action	Executive Director
Todd Piepho	MN DNR	Area Hydrologist
Mike Wachholz	MN DNR	Fire Program Forester
Andrew Yurek	Northfield Hospital + Clinics	Emergency Management / Safety Director
Tammy Stewig	Le Sueur County Emergency Management	Director
Earl Merchlewitz	Goodhue County	Emergency Management Director

2.2 Review of Existing Plans, Capabilities & Vulnerabilities

Rice County and its local communities utilized a variety of planning documents to direct plan development. These documents included a Comprehensive/Master Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, Transportation Plan, etc. (see Section 5.1.4 and Appendix D). The planning process also incorporated the existing natural hazard mitigation elements from previous planning efforts. In addition, the 2024 Minnesota All-Hazard Mitigation Plan was consulted.

In the development of the Rice County HMP, U-Spatial consultants reviewed and incorporated a variety of planning documents that direct community development and influence land use decisions for the county and its jurisdictions. In addition, U-Spatial consultants worked closely with the Rice County emergency management director and other key county staff and local city officials to collect feedback on local mitigation capabilities and vulnerabilities that either support or hinder the ability to mitigate against natural hazards countywide and at the local level.

Building codes offer a way to incorporate geographically relevant and best available building science with policies and programs. Rice County has adopted the Minnesota Building Code. For city-specific codes and enforcement details, see Appendix C.

The following is a summary of the assessment tools used to gather information on local capabilities and vulnerabilities during the planning process:

Capabilities Assessment (hazard-specific): In this assessment, detailed information was collected from Rice County on current plans and programs in place (i.e., existing programs, plans, or policies) as well as program gaps or deficiencies that currently exist to mitigate against damages caused by each natural hazard addressed in the plan. Section 4 identifies current gaps and deficiencies for mitigation, and Section 5.3 describes the mitigation capabilities that are in place by Rice County to support mitigation.

Local Mitigation Surveys: As part of Rice County's 2025 HMP update, participating jurisdictions, key county personnel, and additional agency stakeholders were asked to fill out a Local Mitigation Survey (LMS) form. Questions in the LMS form addressed the following:

- Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment & Vulnerability Analysis
- Local Mitigation Capabilities Assessment
- Local Mitigation Projects
- Survey Participants

The purpose of the survey was to gather jurisdictionally specific information needed to support the update of the plan and to help inform development of local-level mitigation actions for the next five-year planning cycle (for the full Rice County LMS report, see Appendix C).

2.3 Planning Process Timeline and Steps

To update the 2019 Rice County HMP, U-Spatial consultants worked in coordination with Rice County Emergency Management and members of the planning team. The updated plan includes new data documenting the types of hazards faced by Rice County residents and emergency planning officials as well as new thinking on how to address these hazards.

2.3.1 Rice County Stakeholder Coordination

Two planning team meetings took place via Zoom video conference hosted by U-Spatial. Meeting participants included representatives from Rice County, city and township governments, neighboring jurisdictions, and other key stakeholders. Appendix F provides documentation of stakeholder outreach and participation in the plan update

Survey forms to acquire mitigation ideas and feedback remain available on the HMP website

To provide the opportunity for public input, Rice County issued two news releases announcing the plan update and inviting public review and feedback on the draft plan. The news release provided information on where to view the plan and submit comments. The Rice County HMP website, hosted by U-Spatial, and the feedback and mitigation action ideas survey will remain available through the five-year planning period to foster public engagement. Table 2 documents dates of Hazard Mitigation update meetings and public outreach. The public feedback period for the draft plan was open from 11/20/25 to 12/4/25, for a period of 15 days. Appendix G provides documentation of the public outreach for feedback on the draft plan by Rice County and jurisdictions.

At the close of the public outreach period, the U-Spatial consultants worked with the Rice County Emergency Manager and planning team to incorporate public feedback into the HMP. For more information on the planning process, see Sections 5 and 6.

Table 2. Rice County hazard mitigation update meetings and public outreach

Event	Date	Appendix
Kickoff Webinar	7/2/24	Appendix F, Planning Team Meetings
News Release #1	9/4/24	Appendix G, Public Outreach & Engagement Documentation
Planning Team Meeting #1	1/29/25	Appendix F, Planning Team Meetings
Planning Team Meeting #2	10/9/25	Appendix F, Planning Team Meetings
News Release #2	11/20/25	Appendix G, Public Outreach & Engagement Documentation

2.3.2 Overview of Jurisdictional Participation

Throughout the planning process, Rice County and the U-Spatial team worked to engage representatives from the county and each city in the update of the plan. Key activities for jurisdictions included assisting with public outreach, participating in planning team meetings, providing local-level information, and reviewing and providing feedback to the plan update.

U-Spatial and Rice County actively used the following methods to engage jurisdictions in the HMP plan update process:

- **Zoom Video Conferencing:** Planning team meetings were conducted via Zoom video conferencing hosted by U-Spatial. Virtual meetings proved to be a beneficial addition to the planning process, resulting in a high turnout from jurisdictional representatives and other stakeholders, as well as providing the ability for presenters to collect, respond to, and document feedback from participants through Zoom functions such as surveys, chat, and Q&A.
- **Email Correspondence:** Email was a primary tool used to communicate with representatives from Rice County, municipal governments, and other stakeholders. Emails were used to distribute news releases for public outreach, to invite participation in meetings and to share meeting summaries, as well as to request local information and final review of the draft plan.

Email proved to be an effective tool that resulted in increased jurisdictional participation and collection of locally specific information.

- Surveys, forms, and polls:** Input tools such as surveys, forms, and tools were used throughout the process to efficiently collect information in a format that could directly be fed into the written hazard mitigation plan. Polls were used to elicit feedback during the planning team meetings. The Local Mitigation Survey (LMS) was used to ensure feedback from every jurisdiction for critical input such as building code use, NFIP adoption, and changes in vulnerabilities. Feedback forms were posted on the website for easy access during the plan review.
- Phone Calls:** Phone calls were frequently used to conduct direct outreach or follow-up to jurisdictions to ensure participation or to collect information via one-on-one interviews. Phone calls proved to be an effective tool that resulted in increased jurisdictional participation and collection of quality information. Phone calls were especially useful in engaging very small communities that had limited staff or technological capabilities.

Cities participating in Rice County HMP update varied by population and associated government resources to participate in the planning process (e.g., personnel, time, and technology). Rural communities with smaller populations (under 500) typically had part-time elected officials, limited-to-no city staff, and reduced city hall hours in which to conduct business. Rice County and U-Spatial were sensitive to these local challenges and worked to help these local governments to participate using the methods that worked best to accommodate them, such as phone interviews to complete local mitigation survey forms (see Appendix C). Table 3 provides an overview of each city’s participation in the Rice County HMP update planning process and a reference to supporting documentation.

Table 3. Jurisdictional participation in planning process

Jurisdiction (2024 Est. Population, Esri)	News Release #1	Planning Team Mtg #1	Local Mitigation Survey	Mitigation Action Charts	Planning Team Mtg.#2	News Release #2 & Plan Review
Supporting Documentation	App. G	App. F	App. C	Sec. 5.3 App. H	App. F	App. G
Rice County (68,382)	X	X	X	X	X	X
City of Dennison (240)	X	X	X	X	X	X
City of Dundas (1,754)	X		X	X	X	X
City of Faribault (24,908)	X	X	X	X		X
City of Lonsdale (4,698)	X		X	X	X	X
City of Morristown (933)	X	X	X	X	X	X
City of Nerstrand (256)	X	X	X	X	X	X
City of Northfield (21,469)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Neighboring Jurisdictions:						
Dakota County						
Dodge County						
Goodhue County		X			X	
Le Sueur County	X	X			X	
Scott County						
Steele County						
Waseca County						

Section 3 – Risk Assessment and Vulnerability Analysis

The goal of mitigation is to reduce or eliminate the future impacts of a hazard, including loss of life, property damage, disruption to local and regional economies, and the expenditure of public and private funds for recovery. Sound mitigation practices must be based on sound risk assessment. A risk assessment involves quantifying the potential loss resulting from a disaster by assessing the vulnerability of buildings, infrastructure, and people.

The risk assessments in this plan are based on widely accepted tools and databases, consultation with hazard mitigation planning expertise at FEMA and HSEM, and technical guidance from the MN DNR State Climatology Office. Geographic Information System (GIS) tools are used throughout to demonstrate geographically based risk and vulnerabilities.

3.1 Natural Hazard Identification

This assessment identifies the characteristics of natural hazard events, the severity of the risk, the likelihood of these events occurring, and the vulnerability of each jurisdiction’s population and assets.

[See a list of all natural hazards covered in the 2025 HMP](#)

The cornerstone of risk assessment is identifying the hazards that affect jurisdictions. Listed below are the natural hazards addressed in the 2024 Minnesota State Hazard Mitigation Plan:

Flooding	Lightning	Drought
Dam/Levee Failure	Winter Storms	Extreme Heat
Wildfires	Landslides (Erosion and	Extreme Cold
Windstorms	Mudslides)	Earthquakes
Tornadoes	Land Subsidence (Sinkholes	Coastal Erosion & Flooding
Hail	and Karst)	

3.1.1 Hazard Prioritization

As part of the plan update process, the planning team reviewed, updated, and prioritized the hazards faced by residents of Rice County, updated the existing mitigation actions published in the 2019 HMP, and proposed new mitigation actions.

The team examined the hazards identified in the 2019 HMP and adjusted them to reflect the definitions of natural hazards used in the 2024 Minnesota State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

While this HMP focuses on natural hazards, planning took place with the understanding that many non-natural hazards could occur due to natural disasters (e.g., disruption in electrical service due to downed powerlines from heavy snow, ice storms, or high wind events).

The prioritization of hazards for the Rice County HMP Update (Table 4) was based upon group review and discussion of the natural hazards that pose risk to the county during the HMP Planning Team Meeting #1. In the review of each hazard, the group was asked to consider if the risk to severe natural hazards had increased or decreased since the last plan, and if this affected their priority level to mitigate against that hazard. Appendix F provides the discussion notes from the meeting.

Table 4. Prioritization of hazards for 2025 Rice County HMP Update

Natural Hazards Addressed in the Last Plan	Current Priority
Flooding	High
Winter Storms	High
Tornadoes	High
Windstorms	Moderate
Hailstorms	Moderate
Lightning	Moderate
Extreme Cold	Moderate
Extreme Heat	Moderate
Drought	Moderate
Dam Failure	Moderate
Wildfire	Low
Landslides	Low

3.1.2 FEMA- and Minnesota-Declared Disasters and Assistance

Another historical perspective is derived from FEMA-declared disasters. Between 1957 and August 2025, 12 federal disasters and two emergencies were declared in Rice County; see details on the [Rice County HMP website](#).

Minnesota Statutes Chapter 12A established a framework for state agencies to help communities recover from disaster. In 2014, Governor Mark Dayton signed legislation establishing the state's Disaster Assistance Contingency Account to assist local communities after a natural disaster when federal aid is not available. Damage required to declare a disaster is half the threshold of the federal/FEMA public assistance (only) program threshold (MN HSEM, 2019). Rice County has been included in three State Disaster Declarations.

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program, and the former Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program are FEMA-administered hazard mitigation assistance programs that provide funding for eligible mitigation planning and projects that reduce disaster losses and protect life and property from future disaster damages (FEMA, 2021). Table 5 lists the projects in the county funded by a hazard mitigation assistance program.

Table 5. Historical hazard mitigation funding awarded in Rice County

DR#	Fiscal Year	Subrecipient	Project Type	Project Cost	Federal Share
4442	2019	Northfield	904.1: Advanced Assistance	\$123,025	\$96,800
1900	2010	Faribault	200.1: Acquisition of Private Real Property (Structures and Land) - Riverine	\$71,804	\$53,853
1717	2007	Rice County	91.1: Local Multihazard Mitigation Plan	\$97,274	\$72,955
1175	1997	Steele - Waseca Electric Cooperative	400.1: Utility Protective Measures (Electric, Gas, etc.)	\$161,472	\$121,104

SOURCE: (FEMA, 2025)

3.2 Community Vulnerability

The degree to which a person is vulnerable to the impacts of a hazard depends on how well they can react before, during, and after a hazardous event. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR) defines social vulnerability as “...the resilience of communities when confronted by external stresses on human health, stresses such as natural or human-caused disasters, or disease outbreaks” (ATSDR, 2020). Exacerbating these stressors are the increasing number of extreme weather events attributed to Minnesota’s changing climate (MPCA, 2018).

The ATSDR created the CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) to help identify vulnerable communities that need support in preparing for hazards or recovering from disaster. The CDC SVI is created at the census tract level using American Community Survey (ACS) five-year data.

The SVI is included in the FEMA National Risk Index (NRI) and presented in the Risk and Vulnerability dashboard on the webpage for each hazard. Additionally, summaries of at-risk populations in each jurisdiction are available on the county profile page. Vulnerable attributes of a population are addressed with each natural hazard.

The Risk and Vulnerability dashboard for each hazard also includes the FEMA Community Resilience Challenges Index (CRCI). The CRCI is a composite index of 22 community resilience indicators, including population and household characteristics, housing, healthcare, economic factors, and connection to community. The index value provides a relative composite value by census tract and is designed for emergency managers to target outreach strategies and understand the resilience challenges community members face (FEMA, 2024a).

[Explore population vulnerability on the Rice County HMP Website](#)

3.3 Climate Change

Minnesota’s climate change summary is informed primarily by the Midwest Chapter of the Fifth National Climate Assessment (NCA5) dated November 2023 and with interpretations from the MN DNR State Climatology Office (Wilson et al., 2023).

Rising global temperatures and the resulting increases in atmospheric moisture from evaporation of ocean waters have allowed Minnesota to become warmer, wetter, and more humid during the past several decades. The ten combined warmest and wettest years between 1895 and 2022 all occurred since 1998. Nights have warmed faster than days since 1970, and winter has warmed several times faster than summer. Even with the drought conditions of the early 2020s in Minnesota, heavy precipitation continues to show long-term increases, with damaging rain and snowfall events reported somewhere in the state each year of the decade through 2023. Despite no increase in the highest temperatures of summer, maximum annual heat index values (one measure of how hot it feels) have been rising across the state because of increased humidity during heat waves.

Even though periods of intense growing-season drought have defined the climate of the early 2020s in much of Minnesota, long-term increases in annual precipitation have continued because of heavy and even record-setting precipitation during the cold season. For instance, record-dry conditions during May through mid-August of 2021 led to parts of northwestern and northern Minnesota reaching “Exceptional Drought”—the worst category on the US Drought Monitor. A shift to a stormy pattern during the following winter and spring, however, produced unprecedented precipitation between December in May in the exact same areas, with historic flooding along the Rainy River.

The observed changes in our climate have altered growing seasons, damaged forests, challenged natural resource management, limited recreational opportunities, destroyed infrastructure, and affected the conditions of lakes, rivers, wetlands, and groundwater aquifers that provide water for drinking and agriculture. Climate models project that temperature and precipitation increases will continue in Minnesota through the 21st century, with hotter summers and increased drought severity during dry periods as well.

To help the public understand how the changing climate has affected and is expected to affect the behavior of common weather hazards in Minnesota, the MN DNR State Climatology Office developed graphical summaries of the scientific confidence associated with each hazard’s relationship to climate change (Table 6 and Table 7). Climate change in Minnesota has by far the strongest associations with (1) sharp declines in the frequency and severity of extreme cold outbreaks, tied to a persistent warming of winters, and (2) sharp increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events. For instance, from 1970 through 2023, Minnesota’s winters warmed at a rate of almost one degree F per decade, and approximately three-four times faster than summer. During that same period, the coldest night of the year has warmed almost twice as fast as winter as a whole—up to two degrees F per decade (or 20 degrees F per century).

Despite major losses to cold extremes, the warming climate and increased abundance of atmospheric moisture has led to an uptick in many heavy snowfall metrics across Minnesota, leading to moderately high confidence that the changing climate is increasing heavy snowfall events—even as other winter characteristics decline. The intensity and frequency of tornadoes and severe convective storms are weakly connected at best to recent climate changes, and since the 1950s, despite superior detection and verification capabilities, the number of damaging tornadoes rated at least F-2 or EF-2 in Minnesota has shown no increases. Dramatic changes in the seasonal and geographical ranges of severe convective weather have, on the other hand, already affected Minnesota. In 2021, a damaging tornado crossed the Boundary Waters into Canada, becoming the latest on record so far north in the state. Then, on December 15th, an outbreak of destructive thunderstorm winds and over 20 tornadoes struck the southeastern parts of the state, producing the latest tornadoes on record by 29 days.

The climatic picture is expected to change further beyond the 2020s and especially as Minnesota approaches the middle of the 21st century (Table 7). Dramatic losses in extreme cold and additional increases in heavy and extreme precipitation are expected to remain the state’s leading climate change symptoms. Although Minnesota has not yet observed increases in the frequency, severity, or duration of summertime high temperatures or drought (through 2023), climate model projections summarized in NCA5 indicate that heat waves are all but certain to increase by mid-century. A 2018 study conducted by NOAA scientists indicates that by the 2050s, heat waves in Minnesota will be more attributable to climate change than to natural variability (Lopez et al., 2018).

Table 6. Confidence that climate change has already impacted common Minnesota weather/climate hazards

Confidence	Hazard	Recent & Current Observations
Highest	Extreme cold	Rapid decline in severity & frequency
	Extreme rainfall and heavy snowfall	Becoming larger and more frequent
Moderately High	Humid heat waves	Some increase in maximum dew point and Heat Index values since 1980
Moderately Low	Tornadoes, hail, thunderstorm winds	Intensity and frequency unchanged, but seasons expanding aggressively
Low	Drought and dry spells	Intense & major episodes in early 2020s but no long-term trend
Lowest	Summer high temperature extremes	Highest temperatures still well within historical ranges, and number of hot days increasing only slightly in isolated locations

SOURCE: (BLUMENFELD, K. MINNESOTA STATE CLIMATOLOGY OFFICE, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, DECEMBER 21, 2023)

Table 7. Confidence that climate change will impact common Minnesota weather/climate hazards through 2070

Confidence	Hazard	Expectations through 2070
Highest	Extreme cold	Continued rapid decrease in severity and frequency
	Extreme rainfall	Unprecedented events more common
High	Heat waves	Summer high temperatures, maximum dew point and heat index values all projected to increase
Moderately High	Drought	Increased severity likely as summer heat increases; frequency and duration projections unclear
Moderately Low	Heavy snowfall	Greater extremes, but events less frequent as winter rain increases
	Tornadoes, hail, thunderstorm winds	Intensity and frequency unclear but continued seasonal expansion and larger “outbreaks” possible

SOURCE: (BLUMENFELD, K. MINNESOTA STATE CLIMATOLOGY OFFICE, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION, DECEMBER 21, 2023)

3.3.1 Climate Change Impacts and Resilience Planning

The NCA5 states that even if the world decarbonizes rapidly, the Nation will continue to face climate impacts and risks. Adequately and equitably addressing these risks involves longer-term inclusive planning, investments in transformative adaptation, and mitigation approaches that consider equity and justice. In the Midwest, rising temperatures, extreme precipitation, drought, and other climate-related events are impacting agriculture, ecosystems, cultural practices, health, infrastructure, and waterways. Communities, Indigenous Peoples, governments, and businesses are embracing adaptation approaches that include climate-smart agriculture, improved landscape management, innovative green infrastructure financing, and collaborative decision-making.

NCA5 includes these key messages for the Midwest region ([Chapter 24: Midwest](#)):

- Changes in precipitation extremes, timing of snowmelt, and early-spring rainfall are expected to pose greater challenges for crop and animal agriculture, including increased pest and disease transmission, muddier pastures, and further degradation of water quality. Climate-smart agriculture and other adaptation techniques provide a potential path toward environmental and economic sustainability.
- Increasing incidence of flooding and drought is expected to further alter aquatic ecosystems, while terrestrial ecosystems are being reshaped by rising temperatures and decreasing snow and ice cover. In response, communities are adapting their cultural practices and the ways they manage the landscape, preserving and protecting ecosystems and the services they provide.
- Climate change has wide-ranging effects on lives and livelihoods. Mitigation and adaptation strategies, such as expanded use of green infrastructure, heat-health early warning systems, and improved stormwater management systems, when developed in collaboration with affected communities, have the potential to improve individual and community health.
- Increases in temperatures and extreme precipitation events are already challenging aging infrastructure and are expected to impair surface transportation, water navigation, and the electrical grid. Shifts in the timing and intensity of rainfall are expected to disrupt transportation along major rivers and increase chronic flooding. Green infrastructure and public and private investments may mitigate losses, provide relief from heat, and offer other ways to adapt the built environment to a changing climate.
- Climate-related changes to water quantity and quality are increasing the risks to ecosystem health, adequate food production, surface water and groundwater uses, and recreation (high confidence). Projected increases in droughts, floods, and runoff events across the Mississippi River basin and the Great Lakes will adversely impact ecosystems through increased erosion, harmful algal blooms, and expansion of invasive species.

Key messages from the NCA5 are indicated in green throughout this document.

3.3.2 Health Impacts of Climate Change in Minnesota

Climate change already impacts our health, and these impacts are expected to worsen in the years ahead. The risks are especially high for Minnesotans who are less able to cope due to their age, income, housing insecurity, preexisting health conditions, and more.

Heat, air pollution (including wildfire smoke and allergens like pollen), extreme precipitation, floods, droughts, and ecosystem changes are all “climate hazards” that impact our health. Some of these climate hazards have a direct effect, like a heat-related illness from a heatwave, while some have an indirect impact, like exacerbation of asthma from mold growth in a flooded basement.

Heat

Minnesotans will experience a wide range of impacts from the increased frequency and severity of extreme heat events. Higher heat, increased humidity, and longer and more frequent extreme heat events can lead to direct health impacts of dehydration and heatstroke. Untreated heat stroke can lead to death. Heat-related illness directly accounted for 75 deaths in Minnesota from 2000–2022.

Heat can also worsen existing health conditions, such as respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. The people most at risk include those who are more exposed and those who may be more susceptible due to physiological reasons. People more likely to be exposed to heat include outdoor workers in agriculture and construction, student athletes, people who live in cities (due to the heat island effect), people without air conditioning, and unhoused persons.

People at higher risk because of physiological reasons include those with underlying medical conditions, pregnant people, older adults, infants, and young children.

Just as one example of the devastating effects of heat, in the summer of 2011, Minnesota had six days when the heat index was 105 degrees F or higher—and that same summer there were 1,302 emergency department visits and 3 deaths due to heat. What makes these numbers tragic is that heat-related illnesses are preventable.

Air Pollution

In general, we breathe clean air in Minnesota, according to federal standards. But on some days and in some locations, air is unhealthy due to ozone or fine particulate matter. Greenhouse gas emissions can increase air pollution, and rising temperatures can also affect the formation and release of pollutants. Unhealthy air days are expected to become more frequent, and more intense due to climate change.

Climate change is likely to increase three main air contaminants in Minnesota: ozone, particulate matter (including wildfire smoke), and allergens. These air pollutants can cause or exacerbate cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), allergies, and asthma.

Pollen is intensifying with climate change, and can trigger allergies, asthma attacks, and affect other respiratory conditions. In Minnesota, asthma affects one in 16 children (6.4%) and one in 13 adults (7.4%). People with asthma need to be especially aware of pollen sources and seasons to prevent an allergy-related asthma attack.

There are three pollen seasons in Minnesota: trees, grasses, and weeds. Trees are the first to release pollen, typically starting in early April, grasses usually ramp up pollen release in early June, and weeds typically begin releasing pollen in mid-June and continue until the first hard frost. Research shows that the growing season for ragweed pollen, which is highly allergenic, has increased by 15 to 25 days in and around Minnesota. The lengthening pollen season is strongly related to climate change characteristics, such as lengthening of the frost-free season and later timing of the first fall frost.

Indirect health effects from air pollution can include reduced visibility on a high smog day, reduced productivity at work or school due to allergies or asthma, and reduced productivity and degradation of crops and water sources, which can lead to economic burdens.

Those most at risk include:

- Children, because they have developing lungs, are outside more, and they play vigorously and inhale more air per pound of body weight compared to adults.
- Adults over 60, because their bodies are aging.
- People with chronic respiratory or cardiovascular disease because they are more susceptible to air pollution.
- Individuals living near other sources of air pollution (such as roadways, freeways, and heavy industry), because they are chronically exposed to air pollution.
- People of color, because they are more likely to be exposed to more air pollution and have a disproportionate burden of heart and lung diseases, which may increase susceptibility.

Extreme Precipitation, Floods, Drought

Rain is falling more frequently in extreme, heavy, localized events, leading to some parts of our state experiencing flooding while other areas experience drought.

Increased frequency and severity of heavy rainfalls can lead to flooding, which results in both direct and indirect health impacts like:

- Injury or even death from drowning.
- Illnesses from being exposed to contaminated drinking water or recreational sources.
- Mental health stress from experiencing the trauma of the event or later from being displaced or dealing with damaged homes and business.
- Respiratory ailments from exposure to mold from flooded basements.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning from exposure to carbon monoxide when using secondary power sources, like generators.
- Flooding can also disrupt economic and social networks and put a strain on essential services.

The people most at risk are Minnesotans who are more likely to be exposed to flood waters, like those who live in a flood plain or near water bodies, or people who cannot easily evacuate or recover from flooding destruction, such as people who do not have reliable transportation, people who can't use the stairs when elevators are out of service, people in wheelchairs, people with disabilities, older adults, and lower income people.

Heavy rain events can cause standing water in backyards or basements. Many homeowners have experienced wet basements, which is mentally and financially stressful, and if mold starts to grow that can become a health problem.

Localized flash flooding can also be a problem where our infrastructure is undersized, and people get caught off guard by flooded roads. This is an important public health safety concern as almost half of flash flood fatalities occur in vehicles. It takes as little as six inches of fast-moving water to knock over and carry away an adult, and as little as 12 inches can carry away a small car.

Another public health concern with precipitation changes exacerbated by climate change is waterborne disease outbreaks. Heavy downpours can lead to a host of problems, including increased

runoff and sewage overflows, which can cause outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as E. coli and Cryptosporidium. Runoff can carry viruses and other disease-causing agents into wells and recreational waters, contaminating them and causing health problems.

Zoonotic Diseases

Zoonotic diseases or zoonoses are caused by germs like viruses, bacteria, parasites, and fungi that spread between animals and people. Increases in temperatures and changes in rain patterns are changing our ecosystems, which can affect the spread of diseases carried by insects, ticks, rodents, birds, and other animals.

Diseases from ticks include Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, and Babesiosis. As temperatures increase, disease-transmitting ticks will become active sooner and stay active longer, allowing more time to develop and feed on hosts. Ticks thrive in warm humid environments.

Additionally, there may be a decreased die off over the winter months if temperatures do not get very cold. An increase in winter temperatures can also lead to new tick species moving into and surviving in Minnesota, which can lead to the introduction of new diseases.

People more at risk for diseases carried by insects, ticks, and rodents are people who spend more time outdoors or are more exposed to these pests.

Harmful Algal Blooms

An increase in water temperatures can lead to blue-green algal blooms, which contain toxins that can pose harmful health risks. People or pets who drink or swim in water with dangerous levels of harmful algal bloom (HAB) contamination may experience stomach illness, skin irritation, allergic responses, and damage to the liver and nervous system. In extreme cases, dogs and other animals have died after drinking water containing these toxins.

Harmful algal blooms in Minnesota lakes result from several factors including runoff from fertilizers, discharges from waste treatment plants, warmer waters, and higher temperatures. While HABs can occur naturally, the frequency of outbreaks is increasing in part because human activities create favorable conditions for the blooms.

Zoonotic diseases and HABs can have an indirect health effect when they threaten the livelihoods of people who work in recreation-dependent economies that revolve around camping, fishing, and hunting.

Mental Health

Climate change threatens our mental health through direct exposure to a climate-related disaster (e.g., flooding); through the disruption to a major determinant of health, such as a loss of livelihood or a cultural tradition; and through awareness or uncertainty of climate change as an existential threat. These experiences may overlap and lead to compounded impacts on an individual or even an entire community, such as family farmers burdened with decadal drought who are more likely to commit suicide.

Existing research has associated several mental health conditions with climate change, such as psychological distress, grief reactions, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, interpersonal conflicts, drug or alcohol abuse, loss of identity, and suicidal ideation.

Vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, communities of color, and other marginalized communities are most at risk of climate change-related mental health impacts.

3.3.3 Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change adaptation is important for increasing the resilience of communities and the environment. The shocks caused by more extreme weather events and the stressors of longer-term changes to the climate affect all natural systems. For human communities, these impacts challenge the surroundings in which they live, the critically important ecosystem services upon which they depend, public health, local facilities and infrastructure, the safety of their residences, and the viability of their livelihoods. Development trends can further exacerbate both climate impacts and population vulnerability. Communities are only as resilient as the most vulnerable within them.

3.3.4 Climate Change Data and Tools in Minnesota

The University of Minnesota Extension and the University of Minnesota's Water Resources Center coordinate the Minnesota Climate Adaptation Partnership (MCAP), which brings together federal and state agencies, organizations, and individuals statewide with an interest in climate adaptation. MCAP received funding after the 2021 legislative session to develop high-resolution (2.6 mile/4km grid) dynamically downscaled climate projections utilizing the University of Minnesota's Supercomputing Institute. This data is being made publicly accessible via the new [Minnesota CliMAT—Climate Mapping and Analysis Tool](#). This interactive online tool provides highly localized climate projections for Minnesota. MN CliMAT is based on data from the latest generation of global climate models, called [CMIP6](#). With the dynamically downscaled climate projection data, users can visualize even how small cities will likely be impacted in the coming decades (Liess, S. et al., 2023).

More resources are available on the [climate change page](#) of the Rice County website

3.4 Jurisdictional Change in Risk or Vulnerability Assessment

Jurisdictions in Rice County have varying vulnerabilities to and concerns about impacts to their communities. Interviews with jurisdictional representatives in addition to the Local Mitigation Survey resulted in some specific concerns (see Appendix C). Participants were asked to provide feedback on how their community's vulnerability to natural hazards had either increased (due to changes such as development) or decreased (due to local mitigation efforts) over the past five years.

At the local jurisdictional level, several communities did note an increase in development over the last five years as a factor for an increase in vulnerability to severe weather or disaster events.

3.4.1 Jurisdictional Responses

As part of the Local Mitigation Survey form, Rice County Emergency Management and each city jurisdiction were asked to provide a vulnerability assessment that described what structures, systems, populations, or other community assets were susceptible to damage and loss from specific hazard events. This information was used to help tie local vulnerability back to the exposure of people,

buildings, infrastructure, and the environment to the natural hazards listed in Table 4 and to assist local governments in development of related local mitigation actions to reduce risk.

The following is a compilation of common responses taken directly from jurisdictional representatives as preserved in Appendix C: Question 2 – Local Vulnerabilities. Responses here are edited only for clarity.

Rice County

All-Hazards: Not all people are signed up for Citizens Alert. Out shops and courthouse do not have generators to support operations during power outages.

Flooding: (Rice County Hwy. Dept) There are 73.9 miles of gravel roads washing away during excessive rainfall. 500 miles of aggregate shoulders washing away on are 355 miles of paved roadways. At least 7 roadway areas that close due to high water impacts from lakes, streams, rivers and wetlands. There is one road that keeps sliding into a lake.

City of Dennison

All Hazards: Using our City Hall as a potential storm shelter. We are working on obtaining funding for a stand-alone generator for both City Hall and the Well House in case there is a catastrophic event and power is lost for an extended amount of time in town.

Flooding: Our pond system is vulnerable to flooding, which was evident in June of 2024. Three emergency discharges were performed to move all the treated water from our ponds.

City of Dundas

Severe Storms (Power Outages): Winter and Summer storms with ice and/or high winds can take out power. Electric utility is provided by overhead power lines which could impact the community.

City of Faribault

Flooding: We have identified most of our flooding vulnerabilities but lift stations are still one of our vulnerabilities that we have not mitigated.

Dam Failure: In June, 2024 the Woolen Mill Dam suffered erosion damage from a high rain flooding event. The dam is located on the Cannon River in the City of Faribault. City crews worked to stabilize flood-related erosion on the north side of the dam located next to the Faribault Mill, south of Slevin Park. Assessment of the dam revealed the need to stabilize the area and to prevent additional erosion. Should the dam ever fail, roads and the city's wastewater treatment plant would be affected.

All Hazards: We have seen an uptick in our homeless population and any extreme weather (hot, cold) becomes more of an issue for them and us. Our 4 mobile home parks do have sheltering plans but they involve people driving to the shelter which isn't the greatest if time doesn't allow. Disseminating warnings and other messages to non-English speaking citizens is an issue for us. Our senior population is growing and we see more and more issues with this population not having the resources to maintain even the most basic needs like heat, AC.

City of Lonsdale

Tornadoes: Multi- and single-level apartment complexes lack proper shelter and would have to travel to get to appropriate shelter.

Winter Storms, Ice Storms: The city's power service comes from overhead power lines with a portion of the city's population receiving power from overhead power lines.

City of Morristown

Tornadoes: We do not have a tornado shelter in the mobile home park.

Flooding: We have a river that runs through town that directly affects residents who live near the river.

City of Nerstrand

Power Outages: Fire Station is the designated shelter for community. There is a need for a dedicated generator for prolonged power outages.

City of Northfield

Flooding: Our downtown area is an area of concern for flooding. We have been working to mitigate risks.

Tornadoes: The city has a significant amount of overhead power lines that are susceptible to windstorms and tornadoes.

Other Stakeholders

MnDOT District 6

We manage our State Highway System and it is vulnerable to many hazards listed above. The largest vulnerability for this infrastructure is observed trend in increasing extreme precipitation events (both intensity and frequency). The hydraulic assets under and upstream of the roads were designed based on outdated precipitation probabilities (typically TP-40 Design Storms

since Atlas 14 wasn't used until about 10 years ago) and so the risk of damage and traffic impact is greater than originally designed.

Additionally, there are no signs that the increasing trend of extreme precipitation will reverse, so even there is a good deal of uncertainty for the future, it suggests this infrastructure will continue to become more vulnerable.

All populations that use the State Highway System have increased risk of traffic impacts, and we are working to quantify at a high-level certain areas that may have a larger share of that risk.

3.4.2 Future Development

Because Rice County is vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards, the county government—in partnership with the state government—must make a commitment to prepare for the management of these events. Rice County is committed to ensuring that county elected and appointed officials become informed leaders regarding community hazards so that they are better prepared to set and direct policies for emergency management and county response.

As part of the vulnerability assessment conducted for the Rice County HMP update, jurisdictions were asked to describe if there were any factors related to population growth, zoning, or development they felt have increased their community's vulnerability to future severe weather or disaster events. The following is a compilation of responses taken directly from jurisdictional representatives as preserved in Appendix C: Question 4 – Increase in Vulnerability. Responses here are edited only for clarity.

Rice County

(Highway Department) - Rural residential development increases stormwater runoff.

City of Dennison

We have had no new development.

City of Dundas

We have had development over the past five years, but with thoughtful planning around stormwater management. We believe any vulnerability has been mitigated to a certain extent.

City of Faribault

We have seen an uptick in apartment buildings, which place more people in a smaller area so tornadoes and other localized emergencies, e.g., fires, power outages, can have larger effect on more people.

City of Lonsdale

We have had an increase in slab-on-grade homes. Over the last 5 years +/- 100 homes have been built increasing impervious ground cover. The city is in discussion with 2 developments consisting of +/-150 lots.

City of Morristown

We have had no new development.

City of Nerstrand

We have had no new development.

City of Northfield

The city has seen growth over the last five years, but with our city regulation related to stormwater management, requiring private utilities to be buried, and more compact dense neighborhood and/or commercial, we believe have had growth anticipated future climate vulnerabilities.

Other Stakeholders**MnDOT District 6**

Recently, there has been an increase in new development, some of it upstream of the roadway. If the proper design and permits from MPCA Construction Stormwater Permit and MnDOT are obtained, then there is less risk of increasing vulnerability. However, if the development does not address increased impervious surfaces, the extra runoff can increase vulnerability to our infrastructure.

In the development of local mitigation actions, all jurisdictions were encouraged to consider hazard mitigation strategies that would reduce risk in relation to future development, such as the update of local comprehensive plans, enforcement of ordinances, and incorporation of infrastructure improvements to reduce local vulnerabilities (see Appendix H).

The Rice County emergency management director will work to keep the jurisdictions covered by the HMP engaged and informed during the plan's cycle. By keeping jurisdictional leaders involved in the monitoring, evaluation, and update of the HMP, they will keep their local governments aware of the hazards that face their communities and how to mitigate those hazards through planning and project implementation.

Section 6 of this plan further outlines the process by which Rice County will address the maintenance of this plan, including monitoring, evaluation, and update of the plan, as well as implementation and continued public involvement.

Section 4 – Hazards

As part of the risk assessment, each natural hazard that poses risk to the county was independently reviewed for its past hazard history, relationship to future trends, and jurisdictional vulnerability to future events. The county also conducted a capabilities assessment to review the plans and programs that are in place or lacking (program gaps or deficiencies) for implementing mitigation efforts for each natural hazard. An assessment was also conducted for local jurisdictions to identify the plans, policies, programs, staff, and funding they have in place to incorporate mitigation into other planning mechanisms (see Section 5.1 and Appendix C).

[Read more about natural hazard prioritization and view interactive information on all hazards](#)

The following hazard profiles address hazards that the Rice County Planning Team deemed moderate to high risk. Hazards determined to be low risk or without substantive mitigation actions are not required to be included.

4.1 Flooding

Flooding is the most significant and costly natural hazard in Minnesota. Eight of the 14 federal disaster declarations in Rice County included flooding.

After several years of drought and an exceptionally mild winter, the first half of 2024 was extremely wet with frequent, heavy precipitation causing widespread flooding throughout Minnesota, resulting in a Federal Disaster Declaration (DR-4797-MN) affecting 22 counties, including Rice County (FEMA, 2024d).

4.1.1 Probability of Occurrence

From 1996 through May 2025, the NCEI Storm Events Database has recorded 25 flood and flash flood events. Rice County has experienced one flash flood event every 1.4 years and one riverine flood event every 3.1 years on average during this period.

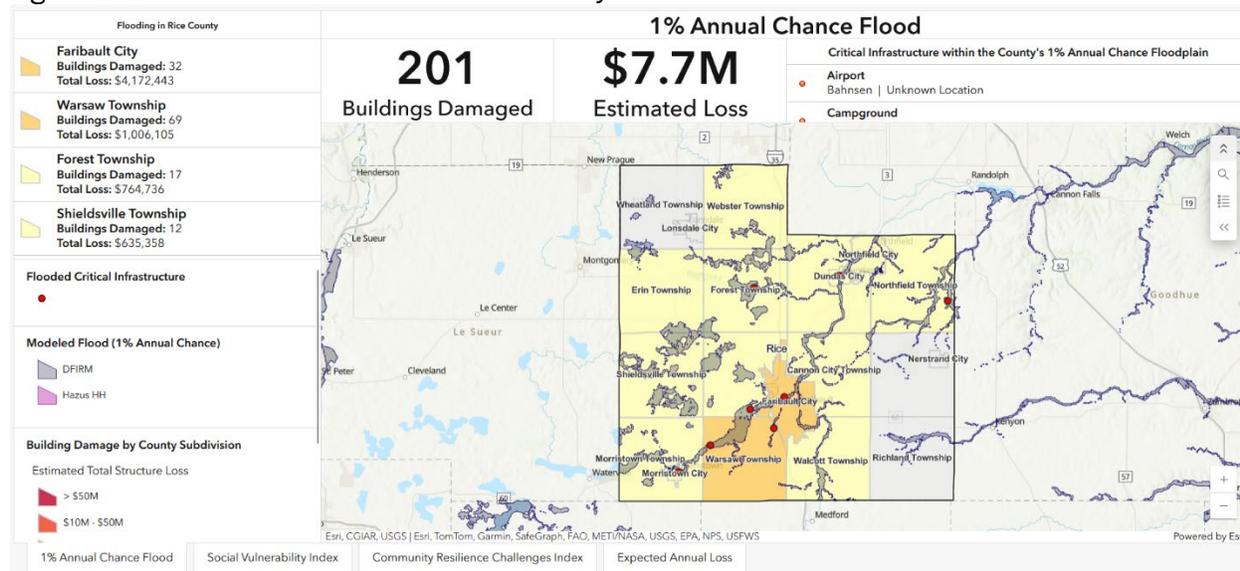
[View interactive maps and see information about flooding history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

Minnesota HSEM has encouraged a potential risk and economic loss analysis for a 1% annual chance flood using the FEMA tool, Hazus for ArcGIS. A Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) defined the 1% annual chance flood boundary.

A raster layer (10m resolution) of flood water depths within the 1% annual chance flood boundary was calculated by taking the difference between the elevation of the ground and the surface of the flood water. Static base flood elevation (BFE) data was available for some areas in the flood boundary, but the water surface elevation (WSEL) had to be calculated for the rest of the flooded areas.

The method of calculating the WSEL varied by the data available. For this analysis, water surface elevations were calculated by interpolating two different datasets: the regulatory water surface elevation values of cross-section lines (primary data), and the elevation at the flood boundary where cross-section line data, were not available. The resulting Hazus 1% annual chance floodplain is shown in the Flood Vulnerability dashboard on the Rice County HMP website (Figure 1), where it is available in an interactive form.

Figure 1. 1% Annual chance flood in Rice County



4.1.2 Vulnerability

Potential economic loss estimates were based on county-specific building data. Rice County provided parcel tax and spatial databases that included building valuations, occupancy class, square footage, year built, and number of stories. The quality of the inventory is the limiting factor to a Hazus flood model loss estimation. Best practices were used to use local data and assumptions were made to populate missing (but required) values.

[View at-risk populations in Rice County](#)

Hazus reports the percent damage of each building in the floodplain, defined by the centroid of each building footprint. After formatting the tax and spatial data, 49,679 points were input to Hazus to represent buildings with a total estimated building plus contents value of \$13.1 billion. Approximately 69% of the buildings (and 57% of the building value) are associated with residential housing. The estimated loss by occupancy class for the entire county is shown in Table 8.

The distinction between building attributes within a parcel was not known, so the maximum percent damage to a building in that parcel was used to calculate loss estimates for the entire parcel. The sum of all the losses in each census block were aggregated to visualize the loss (see [flood risk map on the HMP website](#)). Please note: It is possible for a building location to report no loss even if it is in the flood boundary. For example, if the water depth is minimal relative to 1st-floor height, there may be 0% damage.

Table 8. Summary of 1% annual chance flood loss estimation by occupancy class

General Occupancy	County Total Buildings	County Building and Contents Value	Floodplain Total Buildings	Floodplain Building + Contents Value	Buildings with damage	Building + Contents Loss
Residential	34,459	\$7,544,074,804	337	\$76,415,850	143	\$2,909,427
Commercial	1,620	\$812,117,424	87	\$15,458,200	36	\$133,969
Other	13,600	\$4,781,482,122	85	\$61,240,850	22	\$4,655,351
Totals	49,679	\$13,137,674,350	509	\$153,114,900	201	\$7,698,747

SOURCE: (FEMA, 2024c)

Hazus Critical Infrastructure Loss Analysis

Critical facilities and infrastructure are vital to the public, and their incapacitation or destruction would have a significant negative impact on the community. These facilities and infrastructure were identified on the [HMP website](#) and verified by Rice County.

Buildings identified as essential facilities for the Hazus flood analysis include hospitals, police and fire stations, and schools (often used as shelters). Essential facilities are vulnerable to structural failure, extensive water damage, and loss of facility functionality during a flood, thereby negatively impacting the communities relying on these facilities' services. Fortunately, none of Rice County's essential facilities included in the Hazus flood analysis are located within the 1% annual chance floodplain.

Extreme precipitation resulting in flooding may overwhelm water infrastructure, disrupt transportation, and cause other damage. Particularly where stormwater, sewage and water treatment infrastructure is aging or undersized for more intense rainstorms, extreme rain events may pose both health and ecological risks in addition to costly damage (USGCRP, 2018b).

It is important to identify other critical infrastructure within the 1% annual chance floodplain, given the higher risk of the facility or infrastructure being incapacitated or destroyed during a flood. In Rice County, the Bahnsen Airport and two wastewater treatment plants, Morristown and Dennison, were determined to be at risk in the 1% annual chance flood. These facilities are mapped on the [Rice County HMP website](#). This flood analysis did not evaluate flooding bridges, roads, or other linear features.

There were several other important assets within the 1% annual chance flood boundary and worth further flood risk review. Buildings considered include places where critical leaders' offices may be, historical resources, hazardous waste storage, and places where populations may be exposed, such as campgrounds or mobile home parks. In Rice County, the assets vulnerable to a 1% annual chance flood include two campgrounds, two structures on the National Register of Historical Places, and a hazardous waste facility in Faribault. These vulnerabilities should be reviewed in more detail.

Community Vulnerability

Potential economic losses were estimated by Census Minor Civil Division. The City of Faribault would suffer estimated losses of over \$4 million in the 1% annual chance flood. Warsaw and Forest Townships also have significant estimated losses. All jurisdictions with buildings identified in the 1% annual chance flood zone can also be viewed on the Rice County HMP website.

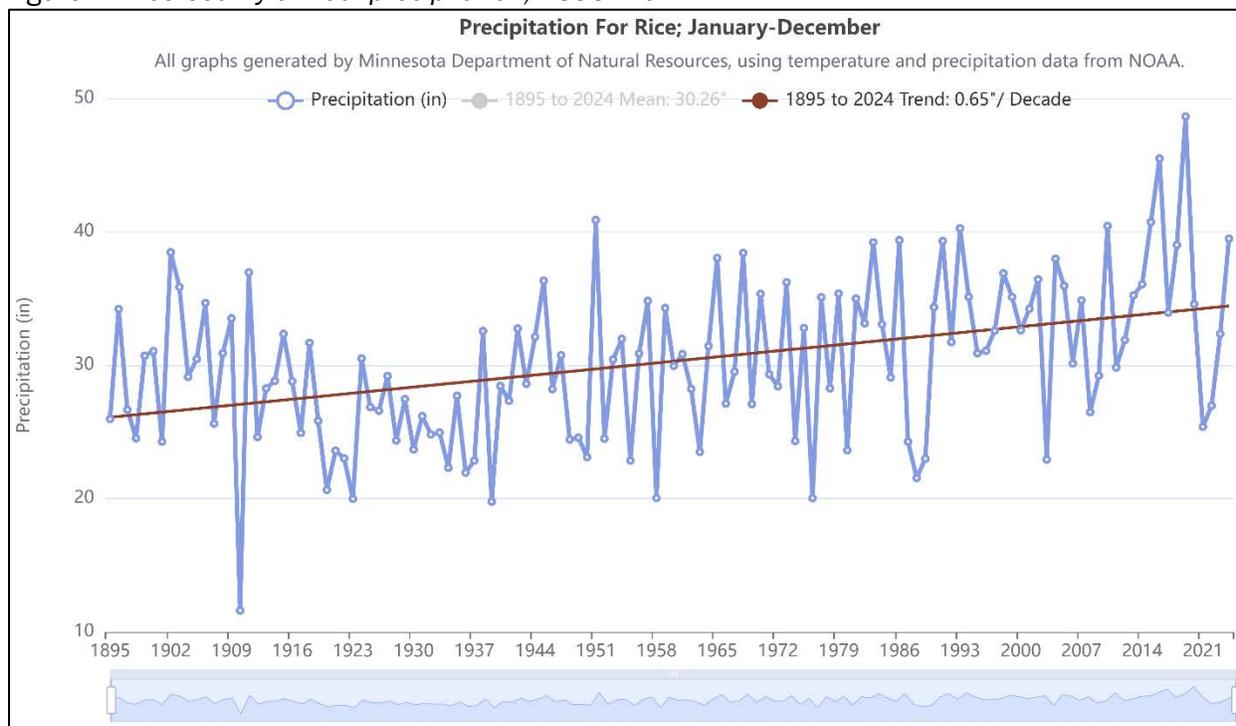
The status of jurisdictional participation in the National Flood Insurance Program and any repetitive loss properties are detailed in Section 5.1.1. National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

4.1.3 Flooding and Climate Change

Higher temperatures globally have evaporated more surface and ocean water into the atmosphere, which, in turn, has provided more potential moisture for precipitating weather systems. In Rice County, the result has been increased precipitation, with annual totals increasing at an average rate of 0.65 inches per decade since 1895 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Rice County annual precipitation, 1895–2024



SOURCE:(MN DNR, 2025B)

Key Message #1 in the Water Chapter of the NCA5 states that climate change will continue to cause profound changes in the water cycle.

Snow cover will decrease and melt earlier and heavier rainfall is leading to increasing flooding (Payton et al., 2023). Additional increases in heavy and extreme precipitation are expected to remain the state's leading climate change symptoms. Heavy rains are now more common in Minnesota and more intense than at any time on record. Long-term observation sites have seen dramatic increases in one-inch rains, three-inch rains, and the size of the heaviest rainfall of the year. Since 2000, Minnesota has seen a significant uptick in devastating, large-area extreme rainstorms as well. Rains that historically would have been in the 98th percentile annually (the largest 2%) have become more common (MN DNR, 2024).

This precipitation increase is found in all seasons, but spring and summer are becoming wetter at faster rates than fall and winter. Whereas temperature increases have been greatest in the northern parts of the state, precipitation increases have been well distributed geographically, and have somewhat favored southern Minnesota, which has better access to moisture from the Gulf of Mexico

and is more frequently near the “low-level jet” airflow (a relatively fast-moving zone of winds in the lower atmosphere) that influences precipitation production.

4.1.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified existing program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to flooding. The following gaps and deficiencies should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce that vulnerability:

Road Infrastructure: Flood mitigation for county and township roads (e.g., culvert replacements, road repair) is an ongoing need. The county and many of our townships have limited funding for road infrastructure. Rice County continues to provide assistance on road infrastructure mitigation projects to reduce the impacts of localized flooding.

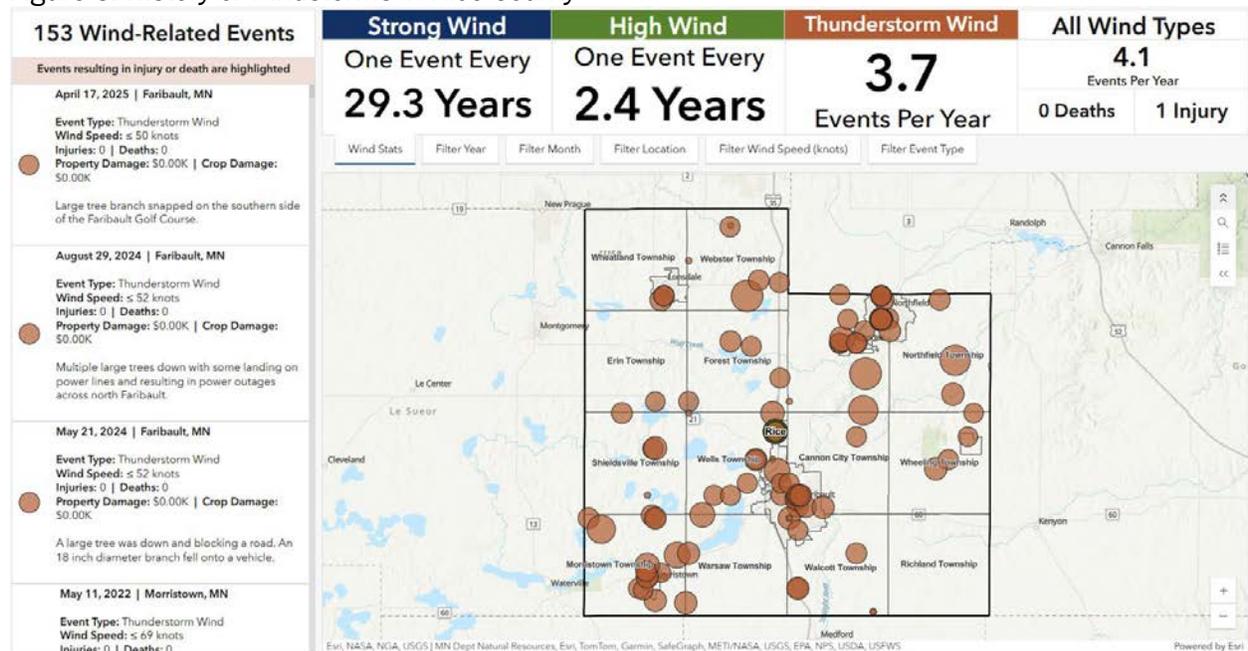
Funding: The county needs funding assistance to improve roads and culverts that experience repetitive flooding. Significant state and federal funding is needed to construct infrastructure projects to prevent, reduce, and mitigate the impacts of high rain events and flooding.

4.2 Windstorms

A windstorm is a wind strong enough to cause damage to trees and buildings and typically exceeding 34 mph (Pielke, 2012). Windstorm events encompass a variety of types of damaging wind. The history of windstorms in Rice County is shown in Figure 3; an interactive version of this map can be found on the Rice County HMP website.

[View interactive maps and see information about windstorm history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

Figure 3. History of windstorms in Rice County



4.2.1 Probability of Occurrence

To determine the probability of future wind-related events in Rice County, records of previous wind-related events (strong wind, high wind, and thunderstorm wind) in Rice County were examined since 1996, the period of record all wind events have in common. The relative frequency of all wind-related events from January 1996 to May 2025 is 4.1 per year. These relative frequencies can be used to infer the probability of these events occurring in the future.

4.2.2 Vulnerability

The likelihood of a windstorm event does not vary geographically within the county, but the vulnerability of its residents is not constant. Vulnerability to injury from all kinds of windstorms decreases with adequate warnings, warning time, and sheltering in a reinforced structure. Therefore, residents living in rural areas, living alone or with limited mobility, or living in a manufactured home may be more vulnerable. Also at a higher risk to windstorms are those who work outdoors or do not have permanent housing.

Structural vulnerability depends in part upon the construction of a building and its infrastructure. Residents of mobile homes are more vulnerable to fatality or injury from windstorms because mobile homes are not able to withstand high winds as well as other structural dwellings, with 50 mph (43.4 knots) being the lower limit of wind speeds capable of damaging mobile homes (AMS, 2004). Steps to mitigate these vulnerabilities have been taken by the state, requiring all mobile home parks to provide an evacuation plan, and parks with at least 10 homes licensed after March 1, 1988 to provide a storm shelter (MDH, 2020). However, mobile home parks often do not provide the required storm shelters (Sepic, 2017). Building codes have also changed to improve the strength of new mobile home construction but there are still many older mobile homes in use that do not meet these new standards.

Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

4.2.3 Windstorms and Climate Change

Lack of high-quality long-term data sets makes assessment of changes in wind speeds very difficult (Kunkel et al., 2013). In general, one analysis found no evidence of significant changes in wind speed distribution. Other trends in severe storms, including the number of hurricanes and the intensity and frequency of tornadoes, hail, and damaging thunderstorm winds, are uncertain. Since the impact of more frequent or intense storms can be larger than the impact of average temperature, climate scientists are actively researching the connections between climate change and severe storms (USGCRP, 2018a).

According to the NCA5 Key Message #5 in the Climate Trends chapter, extreme events are becoming more frequent.

4.2.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to summer storms, including windstorms, that should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce vulnerability. These include:

Above-Ground Power Lines: Most power lines throughout Rice County are above ground, exposing them to potential damage from high wind events. The county and local jurisdictions continue to work with electric utility providers to convert overhead power lines to underground or to implement other measures to reduce risk of power failure.

Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed during tornado season to inform the public on what a tornado watch/warning is and what to do when outdoor warning sirens are activated. Rice County and local jurisdictions also need to continue encouraging residents to be aware of and prepared for severe storm events that can lead to long-term power outages.

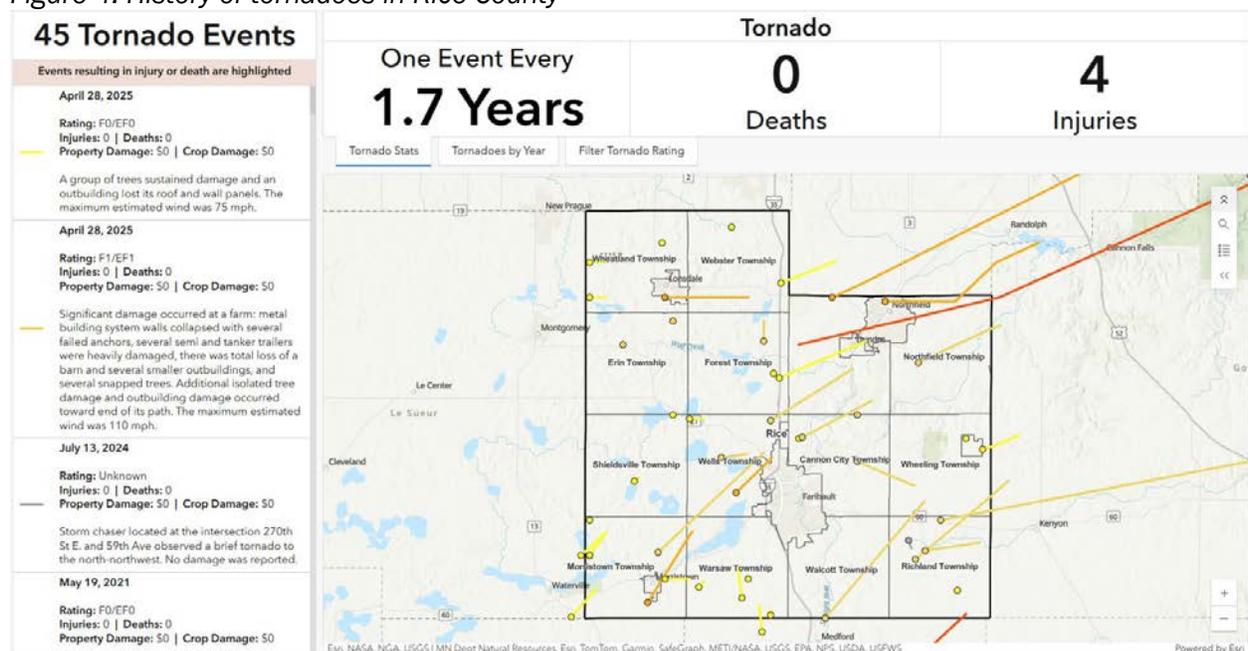
Storm Shelters and Tornado Safe Rooms: There are areas throughout Rice County without viable storm shelters or tornado safe rooms where there are populations vulnerable to high wind and storm events, such as mobile home parks and campgrounds. A coordinated approach is needed to identify where storm shelters or tornado safe rooms are needed and to evaluate whether new construction or a retrofit of facilities is possible. Finding funding for the implementation of such construction projects is also a barrier.

4.3 Tornadoes

With wind speeds reaching up to 300 mph, tornadoes are one of nature’s most violent storms (Hogeback, 2020). The history of tornadoes in Rice County is shown in Figure 4; an interactive version of this map can be found on the Rice County HMP website.

[View interactive maps and see information about tornado history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

Figure 4. History of tornadoes in Rice County



4.3.1 Probability of Occurrence

Estimating the probability of future tornadoes in Rice County was done using two methods. The first method summed the total number of tornadoes that either touched down in or traveled through the county. This sum was divided by the number of years tornado data was recorded, resulting in the annual relative frequency of tornado occurrences in the county. Based on records in the NCEI Storm Events Database through May 2025, there has been one tornado every 1.7 years in Rice County. These 45 tornadic events occurred in 17 of the 75 years on record.

Because tornadoes often cross county lines and tornadic frequency may be better understood using events from a larger area, a second method was used to describe the frequency of tornadic events within a 50-mile radius of any location within the county. A grid of 900 square-meter cells was used to cover Minnesota and 50 miles beyond its border. From the center of each cell, the number of tornadoes that intersected a 50-mile radius was counted. Each cell was assigned a total tornado line count, which was then divided by the tornado dataset's period of record, resulting in the annual relative frequency of tornadoes occurring within 50 miles of the respective cell.

For any location in Rice County, there was an annual frequency of 5–6 tornadoes within a 50-mile radius. The historical frequency was slightly higher in the west-central part of the county. These relative frequencies can be used to infer the probability of these events occurring in the future.

4.3.2 Vulnerability

The likelihood of a tornado does not vary significantly across geography within Rice County; however, certain populations may be more vulnerable and less resilient to the impacts of a tornado. In general, tornado casualties decrease when people receive adequate warnings with sufficient time to seek shelter in a reinforced structure. Because communication is critical before a tornadic event, certain residents may be more negatively impacted by a tornado, including those living in rural areas, individuals with limited mobility, people who do not live near an outdoor warning siren, or those who do not use social media. Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

[View at-risk populations in Rice County](#)

People living in mobile homes are particularly vulnerable to tornadoes because they cannot withstand the strong winds produced by a tornado. An analysis by the Associated Press of NOAA storm data found that since 1996, 53% of tornado fatalities in the United States were people who remained within or attempted to flee from mobile homes (Borestein et al., 2023). While Minnesota law requires most mobile home parks to have storm shelters, many do not (Raiche, 2022).

4.3.3 Tornadoes and Climate Change

Minnesota's climate is undergoing distinct changes, but as reported by the MN DNR State Climatology Office, these changes are only weakly connected to increases in tornadoes or severe convective storms. Minnesota, like all parts of the U.S., has seen increases in the weakest class of tornadoes (rated F-0 or EF-0), but these increases are known to be linked to improved spotting, detection, and verification procedures within the National Weather Service.

When examining tornadoes that cause significant structural damage and are rated EF-2 or above, Minnesota has seen no recent trends towards increasing frequencies—whether measured as raw counts, or as days with one or more of these tornadoes (MN DNR, 2019).

The tornado trends in Minnesota match those found nationally. NCA5 states that while the average annual number of tornadoes appears to have remained relatively constant, there is evidence that tornado outbreaks have become more frequent, tornado seasons are extending into later in the fall, and that tornado strength has increased (Marvel et al., 2023). An October 10, 2021 tornado in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness became the latest on record so far north in the state. Then, on December 15, 2021, an outbreak of destructive thunderstorm winds and over 20 tornadoes struck the southeastern parts of the state, producing the latest tornadoes on record by 29 days (Blumenfeld, K. Minnesota State Climatology Office, personal communication, December 21, 2023).

According to the NCA5 Key Message #5 in the Climate Trends chapter, extreme events are becoming more frequent.

However, climate scientists are unclear about whether the recent statistical behavior of these severe convective storm events has any relationship with the changing climate. This uncertainty results from the fact that tornadoes and their parent thunderstorms operate on smaller scales and more localized processes than the global climate. There has been some indication that, on a national basis, tornadoes are being clustered into fewer days, suggesting a greater tendency towards outbreaks. Scientific modelling studies indicate that the meteorological conditions supportive of severe thunderstorms should increase in the future, but it is unclear whether the specific conditions required for the formation of tornadoes, and particularly significant tornadoes, will increase (Kossin, 2017). Until more studies are completed, the Minnesota State Climatology Office recommends assuming that tornadoes will remain an important and dangerous part of Minnesota’s climate, even if they do not increase in frequency or severity in response to changing climatic conditions.

4.3.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to summer storms, including tornadoes, that should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce vulnerability. These include:

Above-Ground Power Lines: Most power lines throughout Rice County are above ground, exposing them to potential damage from high wind events. The county and local jurisdictions continue to work with electric utility providers to convert overhead power lines to underground or to implement other measures to reduce risk of power failure.

Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed during tornado season to inform the public on what a tornado watch/warning is and what to do when outdoor warning sirens are activated. Rice County and local jurisdictions also need to continue encouraging residents to be aware of and prepared for severe storm events that can lead to long-term power outages.

Storm Shelters and Tornado Safe Rooms: There are areas throughout Rice County without viable storm shelters or tornado safe rooms where there are populations vulnerable to high wind and storm events,

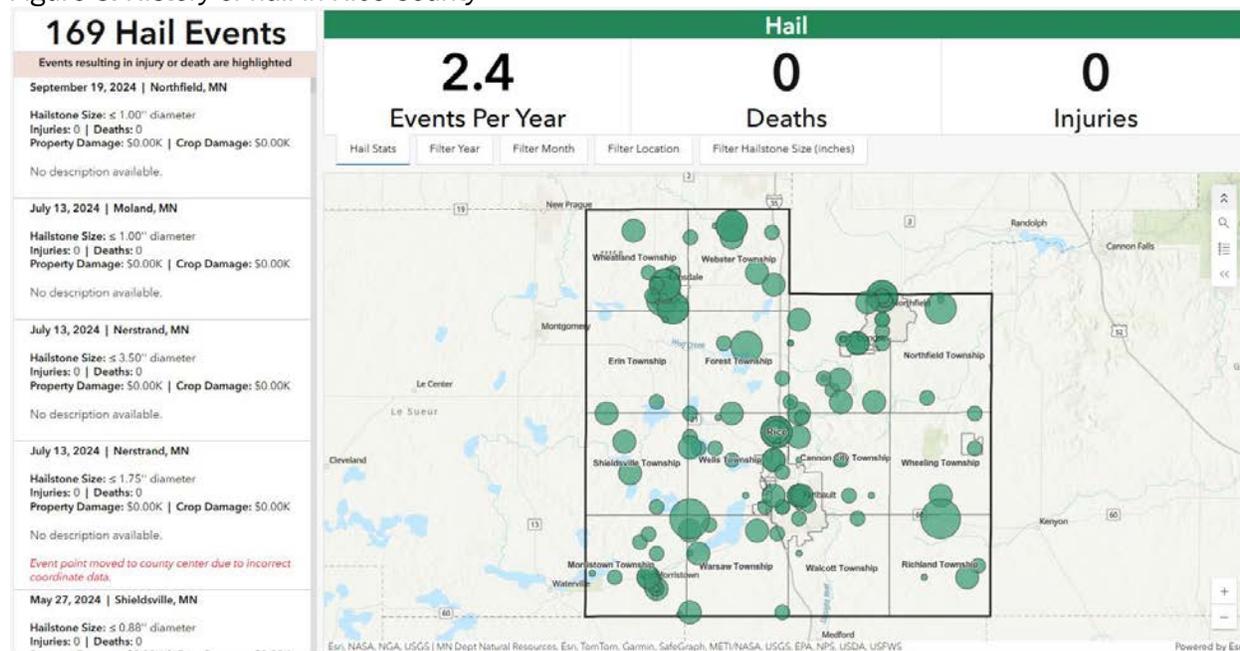
such as mobile home parks and campgrounds. A coordinated approach is needed to identify where storm shelters or tornado safe rooms are needed and to evaluate whether new construction or a retrofit of facilities is possible. Finding funding for the implementation of such construction projects is also a barrier.

4.4 Hail

Hailstorms occur throughout the year though are most frequent between May and August (NWS, 2020). Although hailstorms rarely cause injury or loss of life, they do cost Minnesota nearly \$16 million in property and crop damage each year (CEMHS, 2023). In 2017, 44% of properties in Minnesota were affected by damaging hail events (Samanta & Wu, 2017). The history of hail in Rice County is shown in Figure 5; an interactive version of this map can be found on the Rice County HMP website.

[View interactive maps and see information about hail history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

Figure 5. History of hail in Rice County



4.4.1 Probability of Occurrence

To determine the probability of future hailstorms in Rice County, records of previous hail events in the county were examined for the period of record. From January 1955 through May 2025, the relative frequency of hail events was 2.4 per year. This relative frequency can be used to infer the probability of hail events occurring in the future. Please note that public reports of hail are often secondary to those of thunderstorm winds or tornadoes because if either damaging winds or tornadoes occur, the damaging wind and/or tornado are more important to the reporter and may result in underreporting of hail events.

4.4.2 Vulnerability

Rice County's agricultural lands and structures are vulnerable to hail damage and its residents to injury and possibly death. Data from the Spatial Hazard Events and Losses Database for the United States (SHELDUS) was examined to identify the county's monetary losses due to hail damage to crops, property, injury, and death. From 1960 through 2022, Rice County reported \$72,745,009 (ADJ 2021) in hail damages, ranking 4th among Minnesota counties in total hail damages. Rice County's losses are primarily due to property damages reported at \$68,669,936, followed by \$4,075,073 in crop damages. Crop indemnity payments due to hail totaled \$24,042,051 (ADJ 2021) for the period of record spanning 1989–2022 (CEMHS, 2023).

Within Rice County, the vulnerability of jurisdictions to hailstorms does not vary geographically. As with all summer storms, those who work outdoors or do not have permanent housing are at greater risk during hailstorms.

Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

4.4.3 Hail and Climate Change

Trends in severe storms, including the numbers of hail and damaging thunderstorm winds are uncertain. Since the impact of more frequent or intense storms can be larger than the impact of average temperature, climate scientists are actively researching the connections between climate change and severe storms (Marvel et al., 2023). The NCA reports that in Minnesota's neighboring Great Plains region, hail size, frequency of large hail, and length of hail season are projected to increase through the rest of this century (Knapp et al., 2023). The occurrence of very heavy precipitation has increased in Minnesota in recent decades, and future projections also indicate this will continue (Blumenfeld, K. Minnesota State Climatology Office, personal communication, December 21, 2023).

According to the NCA5 Key Message #5 in the Climate Trends chapter, extreme events are becoming more frequent.

4.4.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to summer storms, including hailstorms, that should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce vulnerability. These include:

Above-Ground Power Lines: Most power lines throughout Rice County are above ground, exposing them to potential damage from high wind events. The county and local jurisdictions continue to work with electric utility providers to convert overhead power lines to underground or to implement other measures to reduce risk of power failure.

Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed during tornado season to inform the public on what a tornado watch/warning is and what to do when outdoor warning sirens are activated. Rice County and local jurisdictions also need to continue encouraging residents to be aware of and prepared for severe storm events that can lead to long-term power outages.

Storm Shelters and Tornado Safe Rooms: There are areas throughout Rice County without viable storm shelters or tornado safe rooms where there are populations vulnerable to high wind and storm events, such as mobile home parks and campgrounds. A coordinated approach is needed to identify where storm shelters or tornado safe rooms are needed and to evaluate whether new construction or a retrofit of facilities is possible. Finding funding for the implementation of such construction projects is also a barrier.

4.5 Lightning

Lightning is a common weather phenomenon that typically occurs as a by-product of a thunderstorm. The potential hazard posed by lightning is significant. Each year in the United States lightning kills an average of 49 people and injures hundreds more (NWS, 2021b). It is impossible to predict where individual lightning strikes will occur due to the nature of lightning being widespread, frequent, and random. People can be struck by lightning through numerous ways, including a direct strike; a side flash (lightning strikes a taller object and a portion of the current strikes a nearby person); a ground current (energy from a lightning strike travels outward along the ground surface); and through conduction (lightning strike traveling through wires, pipes, or other metal surfaces) (NWS, 2021a).

While many lightning casualties happen at the beginning of an approaching storm, more than half of lightning deaths occur after a thunderstorm has passed. Lightning can strike more than 10 miles from the storm in an area with clear sky above (NWS, 2017). There is little an individual can do to substantially reduce risk outdoors in a thunderstorm. The safest action is to get inside a building or vehicle.

Although no lightning events have been recorded in the NCEI Storm Events Database for Rice County, between 1960 and 2022, lightning-related hazards have cost Rice County over \$430,100 in property damages (CEMHS, 2023)

4.5.1 Probability of Occurrence

The odds of an individual in the U.S. being killed or injured by lightning during a given year is 1 in 1.2 million (NWS, 2018). Given that the NCEI Storm Events Database has no reports of hazardous lightning events in Rice County since 1996, the probability of these events occurring in the future is very low (NCEI, 2025). Please note damage from lightning may be underreported in the Storm Events database, because there is no formal public alerting program for lightning (alone) and little to no tracking of lightning damage except through infrequent media reporting.

4.5.2 Vulnerability

All humans and structures in the state are vulnerable to lightning. The risks are greatest during the summer when outdoor recreational activities are most common. Minnesota lakes, boats, parks, and trails place clusters and concentrations of people at risk to afternoon and evening thunderstorms, especially on weekends and during the major summer holidays. As with all summer storms, those who work outdoors or do not have permanent housing are more at risk. Within the county, the vulnerability of jurisdictions to lightning does not vary geographically.

Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

4.5.3 Lightning and Climate Change

The conditions associated with lightning are uncertain. These conditions—tornadoes, large hail, and damaging thunderstorms—are difficult to compare historically but may become more concentrated on fewer days or multiple events may occur at one time. These events could happen without necessarily increasing overall numbers or severity (ICAT, 2017). Severe rain events are certain to be more common and may include an additional risk of lightning. Vaisala documents the unusual severe weather of 2021 in December, which caused thunderstorms and lightning in southern Minnesota (Vaisala, 2021). Climate change may influence the seasonality of hazards such as lightning.

4.5.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to summer storms, including lightning, that should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce vulnerability. These include:

Above-Ground Power Lines: Most power lines throughout Rice County are above ground, exposing them to potential damage from high wind events. The county and local jurisdictions continue to work with electric utility providers to convert overhead power lines to underground or to implement other measures to reduce risk of power failure.

Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed during tornado season to inform the public on what a tornado watch/warning is and what to do when outdoor warning sirens are activated. Rice County and local jurisdictions also need to continue encouraging residents to be aware of and prepared for severe storm events that can lead to long-term power outages.

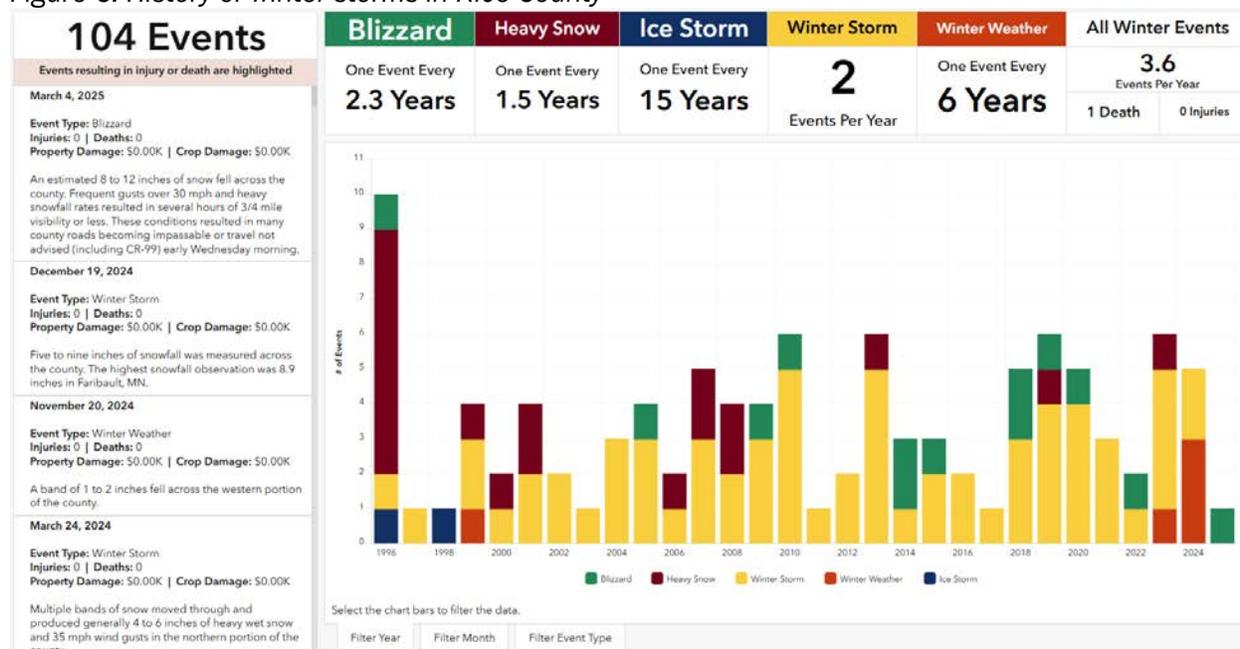
Storm Shelters and Tornado Safe Rooms: There are areas throughout Rice County without viable storm shelters or tornado safe rooms where there are populations vulnerable to high wind and storm events, such as mobile home parks and campgrounds. A coordinated approach is needed to identify where storm shelters or tornado safe rooms are needed and to evaluate whether new construction or a retrofit of facilities is possible. Finding funding for the implementation of such construction projects is also a barrier.

4.6 Winter Storms

Winter storms encompass a number of winter weather events which the National Weather Service (NWS) organizes into the following categories: blizzard, heavy snow, ice storm, winter storm, and winter weather. Winter weather events are common in Minnesota and can be costly. According to the Spatial Hazard Events and Losses Database (SHELDUS), winter weather events in Minnesota have cost more than \$1.02 billion in damages since 1960 (CEMHS, 2023). The history of winter storms in Rice County is shown in Figure 6; an interactive version of this map can be found on the Rice County HMP website.

[View interactive maps and see information about winter storm history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

Figure 6. History of winter storms in Rice County



4.6.1 Probability of Occurrence

To determine the probability of future winter-related storm events in Rice County, records of previous events (blizzards, heavy snows, ice storms, winter storms, and winter weather) were summed and divided by the dataset’s period of record, resulting in the annual relative frequency of winter-related storms. Based on records in the NCEI Storm Events Database through May 2025, the relative frequency of winter-related storm events in Rice County is 3.6 per year. This relative frequency can infer the probability of these events occurring in the future.

4.6.2 Vulnerability

Transportation systems, electrical distribution systems, and structures are vulnerable to winter storms throughout the county. These events do not vary geographically within the county; all jurisdictions are equally vulnerable. While it is highly likely these events will continue occurring annually, the amount of snow and ice and number of winter-related storm events to occur each year are unpredictable. People residing in climates such as these must always be prepared for situations that put their lives or property at risk. It is important that extra consideration be given to the vulnerable populations discussed in Section 3.2. Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

4.6.3 Winter Storms and Climate Change

Historically, winter storms have had a large impact on public safety in Minnesota. If the frequency of snowstorms and annual total snowfalls increase, as anticipated effects of Climate Change, the effects on public safety will also increase. Pressures on energy use, reduced reliability of services, potential outages, and potential rise in household energy costs are major climate change risks to public health that can occur from winter weather.

Table 7 in Section 3.3 discusses confidence that climate change will impact common Minnesota weather/climate hazards beyond 2025, there is some weak evidence that warming winters may make heavy snowfall events less frequent as winter warms.

4.6.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified several program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to severe winter storms. The following gaps and deficiencies should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce that vulnerability:

Above-Ground Power Lines: Most power lines throughout Rice County are above ground, exposing them to impacts/damage from winter high wind and ice events, potentially leading to localized or extensive power outages.

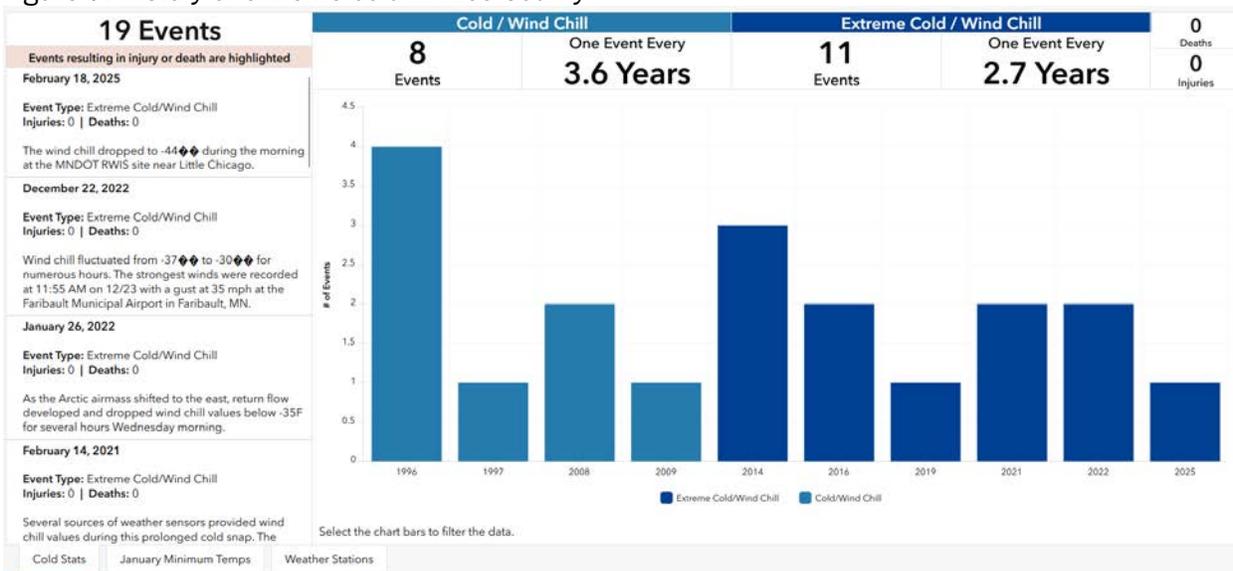
Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed to encourage residents to be ready for long-term power outages or to be snowed in during dangerous winter events such as ice storms and blizzards.

4.7 Extreme Cold

Due to Minnesota’s position in the middle of the continent and subsequent climate, the state may experience extremely frigid temperatures in winter. Winter in Rice County can be especially dangerous when low temperatures and wind create arctic-like wind chills. The history of extreme cold in Rice County is shown in Figure 7; an interactive version of this dashboard can be found on the Rice County HMP website.

[View interactive maps and see information about extreme cold history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

Figure 7. History of extreme cold in Rice County



4.7.1 Probability of Occurrence

To determine the probability of future cold-related events in Rice County, records of previous cold/wind chill and extreme cold/wind chill events were summed and divided by the dataset's period of record, resulting in the annual relative frequency. Based on records in the NCEI Storm Events Database through May 2025, the relative frequency of extreme cold/wind chill events in Rice County is 2.7 per year. (NCEI, 2025). This relative frequency can be used to infer the probability of these events occurring in the future.

4.7.2 Vulnerability

The risk of extreme cold does not vary geographically within the county. Citizens living in climates such as these must always be prepared for situations that put their lives or property at risk. The youngest and more elderly residents, homeless persons, individuals with chronic medical conditions, and those who are working or recreating outdoors are most at risk for frostbite and hypothermia (MDH, 2021).

[View at-risk populations in Rice County](#)

It is not always the depth of the cold that poses a threat but rather unpreparedness for the cold, such as an individual with a vehicle breakdown who lacks a personal winter safety kit in the vehicle. The cost of propane can make rural residents more vulnerable to issues with extreme cold. A propane shortage and resulting crisis, such as that which occurred in 2014, may increase the cost of heating homes and farms to a prohibitive amount (Eaton, 2014). The Minnesota Department of Commerce presents options and suggestions for homeowners who use propane [on their website](#).

The CDC publication "Extreme Cold: A Prevention Guide to Promote Your Personal Health and Safety" outlines preparation measures that individuals can take to reduce their vulnerability to extreme cold. Highlights in this document include advice about travel preparations, securing your home water supply, and safety during recreation (CDC, 2021).

Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to extreme cold.

4.7.3 Extreme Cold and Climate Change

Although climate research indicates that Minnesota's average winter lows are rising rapidly, and our coldest days of winter are now warmer than we have ever recorded, cold temperatures have always been a part of Minnesota's climate, and extreme cold events will continue.

As the climate changes, an increase in extreme precipitation or storm events could lead to a higher risk of residents being exposed to cold temperatures during power outages or other storm-related hazards. Extreme and changing temperatures are already challenging aging infrastructure and are expected to impair surface transportation and the electrical grid.

Key Message #4 in NCA5 in the Midwest Chapter states that green infrastructure and public and private investments may mitigate losses, provide relief from heat, and offer other ways to adapt the built environment to a changing climate.

4.7.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified several program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to extreme cold. The following gaps and deficiencies should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce that vulnerability:

Generators for Backup Power to Critical Facilities & Shelters: Not all healthcare facilities utilized for the care of residents & visitors, including designated severe weather/emergency shelters (schools, churches, etc.) have backup power to run heating systems in the event of a power outage.

Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed to encourage residents to be prepared for extreme weather, including power outages during periods of extreme cold. Rice County Emergency Management continues to do public education through the local schools, senior and health care centers, and local government for severe weather awareness.

4.8 Extreme Heat

Extreme heat describes weather that is much hotter and/or humid than typical for a place and time of year. In the United States, extreme heat is the deadliest weather-related hazard and causes more deaths than flooding, tornadoes, and hurricanes combined. While heat waves are infrequent in a northern state like Minnesota, they can have severe consequences for residents who are not acclimatized to their effects (Runkle et al., 2022).

The National Weather Service (NWS) issues extreme heat watches, heat advisories, and extreme heat warnings based on the heat index, which is a combination of air temperature and relative humidity that determines how hot it feels. The heat index threshold differs based on locality, since people in colder climates are less prepared for heat events than people who live in warmer climates (NWS, 2025b).

More recently, the NWS has developed the HeatRisk tool to issue a forecast of heat-related impacts to occur over a 24-hour period. It is intended to provide risk guidance to decision-makers and heat-sensitive populations. Historical data from the HeatRisk tool, available back to 2015, provide a more comprehensive look at extreme heat events beyond those reported as Extreme Heat Events in the Storm Events Database. The HeatRisk tool takes into consideration:

- How unusual the heat is for the time of year
- The duration of the heat, including both daytime and nighttime temperatures
- If those temperatures pose an elevated risk of heat-related impacts based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (NWS, 2025a).

Impacts of extreme heat are far-reaching and can be severe. Some impacts include infrastructure failures, such as roads buckling and power outages; strain on essential services, such as increased demand for emergency medical services and law enforcement (Guo, 2017; Williams et al., 2020); and disruptions to important social and economic networks, such as school and event cancellations, which reduce access to education, physical activity, and community support.

[View interactive maps and see information about extreme heat history, risk, and vulnerability](#)

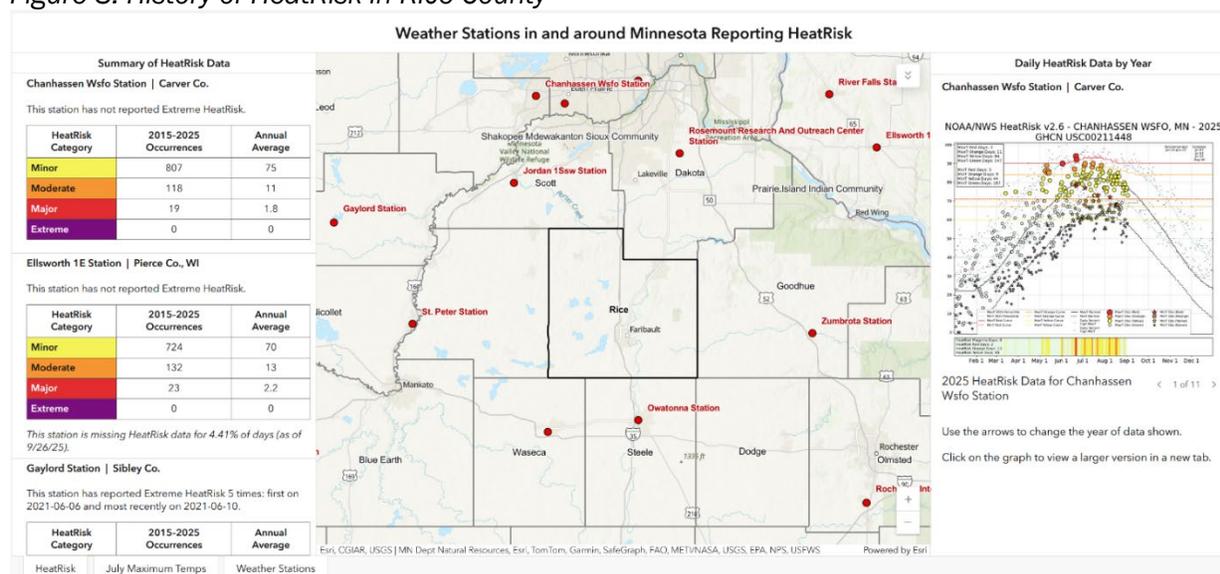
Rice County’s agricultural lands and structures are vulnerable to heat damage. Residents can suffer from increased heat-related illnesses, exacerbation of pre-existing chronic conditions, and even death (Moss, 2017). In the United States, heat is estimated to result in \$100 billion in economic losses annually, primarily due to lost productivity, and it accounts for \$1 billion in direct healthcare costs each year (American Public Health Association, 2025). In 2022, extreme heat led to 682 emergency department visits, 63 hospitalizations, and two deaths in Minnesota (MDH, 2025).

Extreme heat exacerbates poor air quality conditions because the stagnant air during a heat wave increases ozone and particulate pollution (Center for Science Education, 2025). Air pollution is particularly harmful for people over the age of 65, children under the age of five, outdoor workers, and people with respiratory or cardiovascular conditions. The [Minnesota Extreme Heat Toolkit](#) further details the health effects of poor air quality.

Data from the Spatial Hazard Events and Losses Database (SHELDUS) for the United States was examined to identify the county’s monetary losses due to heat damage to crops. Ranking 32nd among Minnesota counties in crop indemnity payments, heat-related losses for Rice County totaled nearly \$1.7 million (ADJ 2021) for the period of record spanning 1989 to 2022 (CEMHS, 2023).

The history of extreme heat in Rice County is shown in Figure 8; an interactive version of this chart can be found on the Rice County HMP website. This dashboard summarizes the occurrences of days when each HeatRisk category threshold was met for each year from 2015–2025. For the purposes of hazard mitigation planning, we have considered days in the Major (Red) Category (a level of heat affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration. Impacts are likely in some health systems, heat-sensitive industries, and infrastructure) and the Extreme (Magenta) Category (level of rare and/or long-duration extreme heat with little to no overnight relief affects anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration. Impacts are likely in most health systems, heat-sensitive industries, and infrastructure) as extreme heat-related events.

Figure 8. History of HeatRisk in Rice County



4.8.1 Probability of Occurrence

To determine the probability of future heat-related events in Rice County, the average number of days exceeding the major or extreme HeatRisk categories is used to reflect heat events in the county. There are no weather stations in Rice County that report HeatRisk. The nearest station, Owatonna Station in Steele County, experiences major or extreme HeatRisk days an average of 3.2 days per year. Waseca Southern Research and Outreach Center Station experiences these events an average of 4 days per year based on the 11 years of record. This relative frequency can infer the probability of these events occurring in the future.

Based on records in the Midwestern Regional Climate Center (MRCC) that date back to 1991, the average daily maximum temperature for July in Rice County has historically been in the 80–82 °F range (MRCC, 2021), which is below the 90 °F for 23 days criteria for “extreme” heat events (FEMA, 2024b). However, Owatonna Station has reported daily maximum temperatures of at least 90 °F a total of 322 times, an average of ten days per year. This historical average can be used to infer future events, although climate change projections show an increase in the number of days that exceed 90 °F by mid-century (see Section 4.8.3).

4.8.2 Vulnerability

The Minnesota Department of Health updated the Minnesota Extreme Heat Toolkit in 2025 to help local governments prepare for extreme heat events. In their toolkit, they note extreme heat events are often dubbed “silent killers” because deaths and illnesses from these events are often misunderstood and underreported. In fact, extreme heat kills more people in the United States than all extreme weather events combined (Adams-Fuller, 2023). Minnesota does not have a mandated reporting system to report deaths and illnesses linked to extreme heat (MDH, 2025), but is important to not underestimate the danger of extreme heat events within the state.

High temperatures can be exacerbated by the urban heat island effect in developed areas, an effect that amplifies temperatures in areas with a higher concentration of impervious and paved surfaces. These types of surfaces absorb more heat and hold it for longer than vegetation cover (EPA, 2019). Impervious surfaces are not spread evenly throughout the county, and attention should be given to cities or areas within the county where this type of surface cover is most dense. The city with the highest concentration of impervious surfaces is Northfield at an estimated 11.58% (MDH & University of Minnesota, 2019). The distribution of heat-trapping surfaces and their proximity to tree canopy are more important than their total area.

The distribution of impervious surfaces can be viewed in the [Extreme Heat Risk & Vulnerability dashboard](#) in the Exposure tab. The metro counties have an additional layer that demonstrates tree canopy, an effective mitigation of extreme heat: urban tree canopy of at least 40% can result in as much as 7–9 °F cooler temperatures (Ziter et al., 2019). The Metropolitan Council [Growing Shade Tool](#) provides data and resources to inform tree planting and canopy preservation for the Twin Cities region to realize benefits, such as cooler temperatures, improved air quality, cleaner stormwater, improved mental health, and enhanced biodiversity.

Rural areas have higher rates of heat-related emergency department visits compared with urban areas (MDH, 2024), and Americans living in rural areas are twice as likely as those in urban areas to have

pre-existing health conditions that make them more vulnerable to extreme heat (Pohl, 2025). Rural agricultural regions can have higher rates of humidity due to moisture-producing crops like corn (Minnesota Supercomputing Institute, 2016), which produces evapotranspiration, or “corn sweat,” that can add as much as 5–10 °F to the dew point temperature (Steil, 2016).

Key Message #3 in the Midwest Chapter of the NCA5 lists strategies, such as expanded use of green infrastructure and heat-health early warning systems, have the potential to improve both individual and community health (Wilson et al., 2023).

Everyone is susceptible to extreme heat, but certain individuals are at a higher risk of developing heat-related illnesses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), population groups more vulnerable to extreme heat include:

- Older adults (≥65 years old). The elderly cannot easily adjust to sudden changes in temperature and are more likely to have a chronic medical condition or take medication affecting their body’s ability to control its temperature.
- Infants and children. Young children and infants have limited control of their surroundings and rely on others to keep them cool and hydrated.
- Individuals with chronic health conditions. These individuals are less likely to respond to changes in temperature, may be taking a medication that exacerbates the effects of extreme heat, or have a condition that is a risk factor for heat-related illness (e.g., heart disease, mental illness, poor blood circulation, and obesity).
- People with low income. These individuals may not be able to afford to properly cool their home and may face transportation challenges when trying to access cooling shelters.
- Athletes and people working outdoors. Both groups are likely to exert energy while being exposed to the heat (CDC, 2020).

Table 9 shows characteristics that MDH has determined make individuals more at risk to adverse health effects from extreme heat, including how that vulnerability ranks among Minnesota counties. The indicator’s percentile rank within Minnesota determines the vulnerability level of Rice County for that indicator (e.g., the 81st – 100th percentile is associated with the highest vulnerability compared to other Minnesota counties). For more information on what makes individuals and communities more vulnerable, see the [Minnesota Extreme Heat Toolkit](#).

Table 9. Populations vulnerable to extreme heat in Rice County

Vulnerability Indicator	Percentage of Population	Percentile Rank within Minnesota	Vulnerability Level
Adults with COPD	5.8%	15th	Lowest
Adults with a self-care disability	3.2%	21st	Low
Adults with coronary heart disease	6.2%	16th	Lowest
Adults with diabetes	9.9%	16th	Lowest
Families at less than 200% of poverty level	16.6%	33rd	Low
Households where a person age 65 or over lives alone	13.4%	41st	Moderate
Households with no computing device	5.0%	19th	Lowest
Households with no vehicle available	5.3%	51st	Moderate

Vulnerability Indicator	Percentage of Population	Percentile Rank within Minnesota	Vulnerability Level
Households with rent over 50% of income	4.9%	78th	High
Medicare beneficiaries who are electricity-dependent	3.2%	6th	Lowest
Medicare–Medicaid-enrolled beneficiaries	1.9%	8th	Lowest
People age 5 or over with limited English	6.7%	94th	Highest
People age 65 or over	16.3%	16th	Lowest
People over age 16 who work outdoors	6.9%	29th	Low
People under age 5	5.5%	34th	Low
People who are experiencing homelessness	0.1%	28th	Low
People who are uninsured	6.4%	83rd	Highest
People who do not identify as “White alone, not Hispanic or Latino”	21.8%	86th	Highest

Facilities where vulnerable populations may be concentrated, such as prisons, group homes, and childcare centers, are considered to be at higher risk during heat events. Minnesota Correctional Facility – Faribault is located in Rice County and does not have air conditioning.

[View interactive information about at-risk populations in Rice County](#)

Warming temperatures will continue to increase the risk of extreme heat, especially among these already vulnerable populations. Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to extreme heat.

4.8.3 Extreme Heat and Climate Change

Minnesota’s annual average temperature has increased more than 3 °F since record-keeping began in 1895, and nine of Minnesota’s hottest 16 years on record have occurred since the year 2000 (MCAP, 2024). In Rice County, the average temperature from July to September has increased 0.7 degrees Fahrenheit per decade since 1895 (MN DNR, 2025b).

Nights are warming at a much higher rate than days in Minnesota. In Rice County, nighttime minimum temperatures from July to September have increased at a rate of 0.2 degrees Fahrenheit per decade (MN DNR, 2025b). While 94% of Minnesota households have some form of air conditioning (including central air, room units, dehumidifiers, and ceiling fans), only 68% have the central air conditioning that can provide reliable whole-house cooling (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2023). Furthermore, homes with air conditioning equipment may not use it; for example, low-income homes might not turn on their units due to the associated costs, and homes in areas with higher crime rates may be reluctant to use window units for security reasons (EPA, 2006).

Climate models project that temperature and precipitation increases will continue in Minnesota through the 21st century, with hotter summers and increased drought severity during dry periods as well. Already, the maximum annual heat index values have been rising across the state, because increased humidity during heat waves (Blumenfeld, K. Minnesota State Climatology Office, personal communication, December 21, 2023).

Table 10 compares historical temperature averages to projections under a high emissions (SSP 585) scenario, demonstrating how many more days will reach above 90 °F and nights where the minimum does not go below 75.2 °F. The data in the table is taken from [Minnesota CliMAT](#), an interactive online tool that provides highly localized climate projections for Minnesota and visualize how even specific towns will likely be impacted in the coming decades (Liess, S. et al., 2023). While models differ on how many degrees of warming will be caused by climate change, all models agree that temperatures will continue to rise.

Table 10. Historical vs projected number of days reaching temperature thresholds in Rice County

	Historical (1995–2014)	Projected (2040–2059)	Change
Days Above 90	20.87	44.94	+24.07
Nighttime Minimum > 75.2	0.99	5.93	+4.94

The average number of days per year with temperatures over 90 °F under a very high carbon emissions (SSP 585), mid-century (2040–2059) scenario is illustrated in the [Climate Dashboard](#) on the Plan website.

Greenhouse gas concentrations will continue rising through the century, and the air’s ability to trap heat from the Earth’s surface will increase accordingly. Warming of the atmosphere will evaporate even more water into the air, further limiting the amount of cooling Minnesota will be able to achieve at night and during the winter. As warmer winters and warmer baseline conditions transition into summer, it will be much easier to attain extreme heat (MN DNR, 2025a).

4.8.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified several program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to extreme heat. The following gaps and deficiencies should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce that vulnerability:

Generators for Backup Power to Critical Facilities & Shelters: Not all healthcare facilities utilized for the care of residents & visitors, including designated severe weather/emergency shelters (schools, churches, etc.) have backup power to run cooling systems in the event of a power outage.

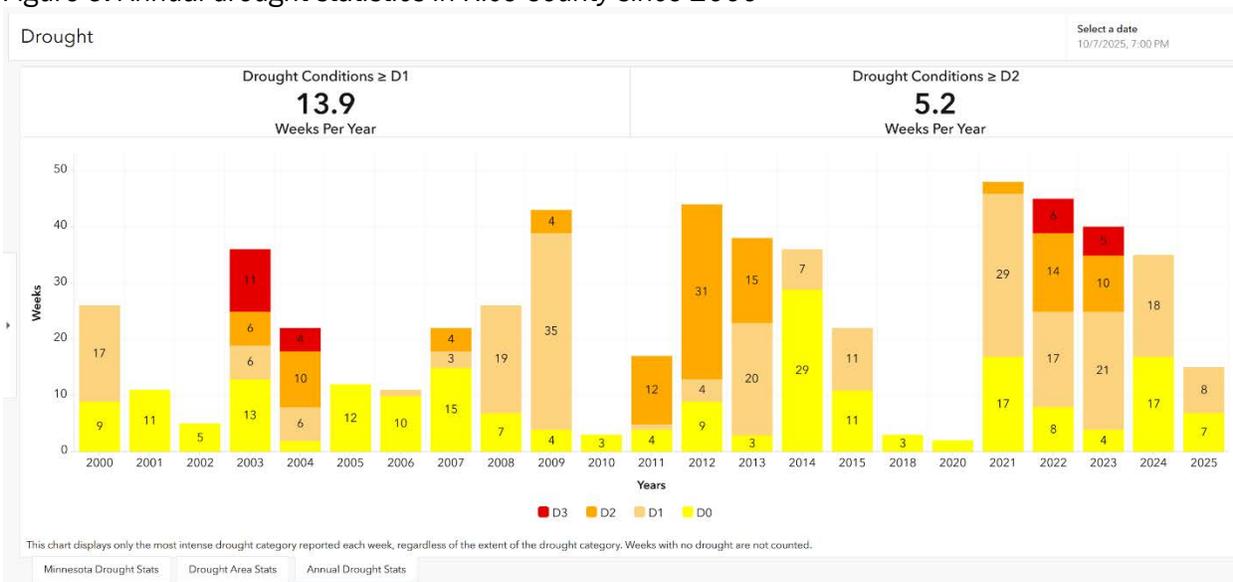
Public Education: Ongoing public education is needed to encourage residents to be prepared for extreme weather, including periods of extreme heat. Rice County Emergency Management continues to do public education through the local schools, senior and health care centers, and local government for severe weather awareness.

4.9 Drought

There are numerous approaches to assessing drought conditions. The current gold standard for accurate drought conditions in the United States is the United States Drought Monitor (USDM). Annual drought statistics since 2000 can be seen in Figure 9; an interactive version of this dashboard can be found on the Rice County HMP website.

See interactive information about drought, including history and the USDM Dashboard, on the Rice County HMP website

Figure 9. Annual drought statistics in Rice County since 2000



4.9.1 Probability of Occurrence

To determine the probability of future droughts in Rice County, records of previous droughts were summed and divided by the dataset’s period of record, resulting in the annual relative frequency of droughts. The USDM database was examined from January 2000–October 7, 2025 for any occurrence of drought ≥ D1 in Rice County, regardless of the duration of the drought. According to the weekly reported data, the relative frequency of the county experiencing drought conditions ≥ D1 is 13.9 weeks per year, and the relative frequency of drought conditions ≥ D2 is 5.2 weeks per year (NDMC, 2025b). The relative frequency of past droughts can be used to infer the probability of similar droughts occurring in the future.

4.9.2 Vulnerability

One way to identify county assets vulnerable to drought is by examining the impacts of previous droughts. Overseen by the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC), the Drought Impact Reporter (DIR) is a comprehensive database that gathers drought-related reports from a variety of sources and identifies the sector(s) impacted by each drought. The NDMC (NDMC, 2025b) defines a drought impact as “[a]n observable loss or change that occurred at a specific place and time because of drought.” A drought meeting this definition is categorized based on the sector(s) the drought impacts; therefore, a single drought affecting multiple sectors will be counted once for each respective sector it impacted.

DIR records show three reported drought impacts in Rice County from 2000 to 2024, affecting four sectors with greatest impacts to the following sectors: relief, response & restrictions; agriculture; business & industry; and society & public health (NDMC, 2025a). Since droughts are regional in nature, jurisdictions within Rice County do not vary in their vulnerability to drought; however, the impacts from droughts are not equal.

Drought conditions may impact soil moisture reserves, groundwater supplies, lake levels, and stream flows. Water-dependent industries that experience the greatest impacts include: agriculture, public utilities, forestry, and tourism (MN DNR, 2021). In addition, droughts may negatively affect an individual's health by contributing to poor air quality caused by wildfire smoke and particulate matter, or a dusty environment. The 2021 drought resulted in elevated fire danger in roughly the northern two-thirds of the state, and record-high particulate readings across Minnesota due to the Canadian wildfires (Huttner, 2021). [Populations vulnerable to these conditions](#) include children, older adults, and those with respiratory issues.

According to the DIR, Rice County's agriculture sector has been impacted by drought, and with 56.8% of Rice County's land devoted to cultivated crops, the county's agriculture community is also vulnerable to the economic impact a drought may have on crops. From 1989–2022, Rice County received \$24,042,051 (2021 ADJ) in crop indemnity payments due to drought, placing it as the 37th-highest-paid county in Minnesota (CEMHS, 2023).

Section 3.4 provides jurisdictional responses to localized vulnerabilities to specific hazards.

4.9.3 Drought and Climate Change

Droughts have been happening throughout Minnesota's history. While the degree at which climate change will impact future droughts is not certain, an increase in efforts and resources are being devoted to project these impacts. In 2023, the NCA5 was completed by the U.S. Global Change Research Program. It provided a comprehensive scientific review of how climate change is impacting the U.S. as well as providing climate change projections.

According to the report, a warming climate is contributing to oscillations between extreme droughts and floods, threatening the agriculture and livestock in the Midwest which produces more than 30% of the world's corn and soybeans (Wilson et al., 2023). Climate change is attributed to an estimated \$31.9 billion (2022 USD adjusted) of US crop indemnity payments over the last 30 years, with the largest portion of payments going to farmers affected by drought (Wilson et al., 2023). In Minnesota, drought alone represents 25% of the total crop indemnity payments made in the state (CEMHS, 2023).

Climate projections indicate an increase in annual precipitation of 0.2%–0.5% in the western Midwest and the increase in cumulative runoff is expected to continue through the midcentury (Wilson et al., 2023).

Key Message #5 in the Midwest Chapter of the NCA5 states that managing extremes is necessary to minimize impacts on water quality and quantity. The extreme variability between wet and dry periods is expected to negatively impact the water quality and quantity of the Mississippi River System and adversely affect dependent ecosystems and commerce (Wilson et al., 2023).

4.9.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management did not identify any program gaps or deficiencies that make its citizens more vulnerable to drought.

4.10 Dam Failure

The MN DNR Dam Safety Program has the mission of protecting the life and safety of people by ensuring that dams are safe. Minnesota's Dam Safety Program sets minimum standards for dams and regulates the design, construction, operation, repair, and removal of both privately and publicly (non-federal) owned dams (MN DNR, 2020). The federal government is responsible for regulating and maintaining dam safety of federally owned dams. No single agency regulates all federally owned dams. 42% of federal dams are owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and the Bureau of Reclamation. The remaining federal dams are owned and managed by other federal agencies, including the Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, the Department of Defense, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, among others (Normand, 2019). The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Dam Safety Program is the largest dam safety program in the U.S. The Commission works with federal and state agencies to ensure and promote dam safety of over 3,000 dams across the U.S. The Commission inspects projects on an unscheduled basis to investigate potential dam safety problems; complaints about constructing and operating a project; safety concerns related to natural disasters; and issues concerning compliance with the term and conditions of a license (FERC, 2020).

Dam Inventory: The National Dam Inventory reports that there are 13 dams in Rice County. Dams are mapped on the [MN State 2024 HMP website](#). Rice County has one dam classified as a High Hazard Dam, three dams classified as Significant Hazard Dams, eight dams classified as Low Hazard Dams, and one dam classified as having Undetermined hazard potential. The Minnesota Dam Safety Program office was consulted to identify dam incidents and concerns.

4.10.1 Probability of Occurrence

Extreme precipitation is only one factor contributing to dam failure, and the possibility of failure is dam-specific, relating to both environmental and structural conditions. There are no noted dam incidents in Rice County. Total dam failures are extremely unlikely if the dam is maintained in compliance with Minnesota's Dam Safety Program. The likelihood of failure in Rice County is low.

4.10.2 Vulnerability

Although dam regulatory authorities differ between various federal and state agencies, all authorities attempt to classify dams according to the potential impacts from a dam failure or mis-operation. In response to the numerous classification systems, FEMA's Interagency Committee on Dam Safety created a downstream hazard potential classification system that is adaptable to any agency's current system. Table 11 provides an overview of the main criteria agencies consider when determining a dam's downstream hazard potential. This classification system does not imply that the dam is unsafe, but rather categorizes dams based on the probable loss of human life and the impacts on economic, environmental, and lifeline interests (FEMA, 2004). Dams for which a hazard potential has not been designated, or is not provided, are classified as "Undetermined."

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is a document that identifies potential emergency conditions at a dam and specifies preplanned actions to be followed during a dam failure to minimize property damage or loss of life. An EAP is required for Class I dams and strongly recommended for Class II dams (MN DNR, 2020).

Table 11. Downstream hazard potential classification criteria

Hazard Potential Classification	Loss of Human Life	Economic, Environmental, Lifeline Losses
Class III (Low)	None expected	Low and generally limited to owner
Class II (Significant)	None expected	Yes
Class I (High)	Probable - one or more expected.	Yes (but not necessary for this classification)

SOURCE: (USACE, 2008)

Rice County owns one dam that is classified as having high hazard potential— King’s Mill (Table 12). An earthen gravity dam built in 1862, King’s Mill is located on the Cannon River within the municipal boundary of Faribault. The dam has an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) prepared. Annual reporting and inspections are done with the USACE and DNR Flood Safety. Standard operating procedures are developed for the operation of the infrastructure during flooding events (USACE, 2024).

King’s Mill is classified as a recreation dam by the National Dam Inventory. It is a prominent feature of King Mill Park, a county park within the city of Faribault that is a well-regarded fishing spot. King’s Mill was assessed to be in Fair condition in May 2024. Its EAP was last updated in March 2018.

Table 12. High Hazard Dams in Rice County

Name	Nearest City	River or Stream Name	Height (Ft)	Year	Max Storage (Acre-Ft)	Drainage Area (Sq Miles)	Max Discharge (Cubic Ft/Sec)
King’s Mill	Faribault	Cannon River	17	1862	25,500	321	1,750

4.10.3 Dam Failure and Climate Change

Dams are designed based on assumptions about a river’s annual flow behavior that will determine the volume of water behind the dam and flowing through the dam at any one time. Changes in weather patterns due to climate change may change the hydrograph or expected flow pattern. Spillways are put in place on dams as a safety measure in the event of the reservoir filling too quickly. Spillway overflow events are mechanisms that also result in increased discharges downstream. It is conceivable that bigger rainfalls at earlier times in the year could threaten a dam's designed margin of safety, causing dam operators to release greater volumes of water earlier in a storm cycle in order to maintain the required margins of safety. Such early releases of increased volumes can increase flood potential downstream.

Climate change may increase the probability of design failures. Some spillways may not be large enough to convey the increased flow pattern. An undersized spillway could lead to dam overtopping and failure.

The partial failure of the Rapidan Dam in Blue Earth County in June of 2024 highlighted the growing threat climate change poses to the country’s aging infrastructure as extreme weather becomes more common and severe. The Rapidan Dam is a Significant Hazard Dam in “poor” condition. About 20% of Minnesota’s Significant and High Hazard Potential Dams are in “fair” or “poor” condition, with a few in “undefined” condition, and about 70% of these dams were built before 1970 (USACE, 2024). These older dams are growing increasingly taxed by extreme weather, especially in the Midwest (Harrison,

2024). Climate change is adding a new level of uncertainty that needs to be considered with respect to assumptions made during the dam construction.

While the Rapidan Dam partial failure did not result in mass inundation, it sent an estimated 11.6 million cubic yards of sediment downstream. The sediment was high in phosphorus and nitrogen because of nearby agricultural runoff. The impacts to the fish habitat and ecology of the stream may not be known for years (MPR News, 2024). The sediment loading behind older dams adds another compounding threat of dam failure to the stream and structures below.

4.10.4 Program Gaps and Deficiencies

Rice County Emergency Management identified existing program gaps and deficiencies that make its residents more vulnerable to dam failure. The following gaps and deficiencies should be addressed with new mitigation efforts to reduce that vulnerability:

Post-flood Erosion: In June, 2024, the Woolen Mill Dam in the City of Faribault sustained damage due to a high rain and flooding event. City crews worked to stabilize flood-related erosion on the north side of the dam located next to the Faribault Mill, south of Slevin Park. Assessment of the dam revealed the need to stabilize the area and to prevent additional erosion. There is no risk to public safety. The city of Faribault is continuing to monitor the dam and planning for how to mitigate further erosion.

Section 5 – Mitigation Strategy

The goal of mitigation is to protect lives and reduce the impacts of future hazard events, including property damage, disruption to local and regional economies, the amount of public and private funds spent on recovery, and to build disaster-resistant communities. Mitigation actions and projects should be based on a well-constructed risk assessment as provided in Section 3 of this plan and on the HMP website. Mitigation should be an ongoing process, adapting over time to accommodate a community's needs.

5.1 Community Capability Assessments

The capability assessment identifies current activities and existing planning tools used to mitigate hazards. The capability assessment identifies the policies, regulations, procedures, programs, and projects that contribute to reducing disaster damages. The assessment also evaluates these capabilities to determine whether the activities can be improved to more effectively reduce the impact of future hazard events. The following sections identify existing plans and mitigation capabilities within all of the communities:

- Appendix D: Lists the plans and programs in place in Rice County as related to hazard mitigation.
- Appendix C: As part of the Rice County HMP update, the county and city governments were asked to participate in filling out a “Local Mitigation Survey” (LMS) form to report on their current mitigation capabilities and program gaps. Appendix C provides the LMS reports gathered for Rice County.

Information from the capability assessments was used to support development of local mitigation actions for implementation over the next five years (see column *Comments on Implementation & Integration*).

5.1.1 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The NFIP is a federal program created by Congress to mitigate future flood losses nationwide through sound, community-enforced building and zoning ordinances and to provide access to affordable, federally backed flood insurance protection for property owners. The NFIP is designed to provide an insurance alternative to disaster assistance to meet the escalating costs of repairing damage to buildings and their contents caused by floods. Participation in the NFIP is based on an agreement between local communities and the federal government that states that if a community will adopt and enforce a floodplain management ordinance to reduce future flood risks to new construction in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), the federal government will make flood insurance available within the community as a financial protection against flood losses.

Jurisdictional participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is outlined below (G. Bennett MN DNR, personal communication, July 23, 2025).

Rice County

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 5/30/1974 (Emergency Entry); 2/4/1981 (Regular Entry)
- FEMA Map: FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: 152
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 3/22/2022 (Effective 4/6/2022)
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 3/22/2022
- Floodplain Administrator: Trent McCorkell, Zoning Administrator
(RCPlanningZoning@ricecountymn.gov)

Dennison

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 9/18/85
- FEMA Map: 9/25/2009
- Current Effective Map Date: 9/25/2009
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: 7 (Goodhue County)
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 9/24/2009
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 4/3/12
- Floodplain Administrator: Jessica Page, City Clerk

Dundas

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 9/26/1975 (Emergency Entry); 4/15/1982 (Regular Entry)
- FEMA Map: FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022 (and FIRM panels dated 4/3/2012)
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: 0
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 1/23/2012 (Effective 1/28/2012)
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 1/23/2012
- Floodplain Administrator: Nate Sparks, City Planner (nsparks@nacplanning.com)

Faribault

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 4/19/1974 (Emergency Entry); 11/1/1978 (Regular Entry)
- FEMA Map: FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022 (and FIRM panels dated 4/3/2012)
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: 32
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 12/28/2021 (Effective 1/18/2022)
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 12/28/2021
- Floodplain Administrator: David Wanberg, Community & Economic Development Director (dwanberg@ci.faribault.mn.us)

Lonsdale

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 6/23/1999 (Emergency Entry); 4/3/2012 (Regular Entry)
- FEMA Map: No Special Flood Hazard Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022 (and FIRM panel dated 4/3/2012)
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: NA
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 10/25/2012 (Effective 12/1/2012)
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 10/25/2012
- Floodplain Administrator: Joe Dornfeld, Public Works Director (jdornfeld@lonsdalemn.com)

Morristown

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 8/16/2011 (Regular Entry)
- FEMA Map: FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022 (and FIRM panels dated 4/3/2012)
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain:
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 12/5/2011 (Effective 1/22/2012)
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 12/5/2011
- Floodplain Administrator: Ellen Judd, City Administrator (ejudd@ci.morristown.mn.us)

Nerstrand

- Status: Not Participating
- Entry Date: NA
- FEMA Map: FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: 15
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: NA
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: NA
- Floodplain Administrator: NA

Northfield

- Status: Participating
- Entry Date: 4/10/1974 (Emergency Entry); 9/2/1981 (Regular Entry)
- FEMA Map: FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas
- Current Effective Map Date: 4/6/2022 (Rice Co.; and FIRM panels dated 4/3/2012); 3/16/2016 (Dakota Co.; and FIRM panels dated 12/2/2011))
- Potential Buildings Damaged in Floodplain: 2
- Adoption of Current Floodplain Ordinance: 4/16/2013 (Effective 4/20/2013)
- Adoption of latest DFIRM Map: 4/16/2013
- Floodplain Administrator: Mikayla Schmidt, City Planner (mikayla.schmidt@ci.northfield.mn.us)

Following a damaging flood event, any impacted jurisdiction would work with the MN DNR to use a form to track cumulative improvements and repetitive losses in the floodplain. The affected jurisdiction would also review the [Minnesota Post-Flood Substantial Damage Playbook for Local Officials](#).

5.1.2 Repetitive Loss Properties

Repetitive loss properties are defined as properties with two or more flood insurance claims of \$1,000 or more in any rolling 10-year period. Property owners are asked to consider mitigation activities such as acquisition, relocation, or elevation, among other options. FEMA's Repetitive Loss (RL) properties strategy is to eliminate or reduce the damage to property and the disruption to life caused by repeated flooding of the same properties. Property owners are notified of their status by FEMA.

A Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) property is defined as a residential property that is covered under an NFIP flood insurance policy and:

- a) That has at least four NFIP claim payments (including building and contents) over \$5,000 each, and the cumulative amount of such claims payments exceeds \$20,000; or
- b) For which at least two separate claims payments (building payments only) have been made with the cumulative amount of the building portion of such claims exceeding the market value of the building.
- c) For both (a) and (b) above, at least two of the referenced claims must have occurred within any 10-year period and must be greater than 10 days apart.

Rice County has seven RL properties and one SRL property. The SRL property is located in Northfield, as are four RL properties. One RL property is in Morristown, and the remaining three RL properties are listed as being generally within Rice County. Net payments for these properties total \$1,654,725 (Ceil Strauss, MN Floodplain Manager, personal communication, August 8, 2025).

For more on the areas that flood repeatedly in Rice County, see the [Rice County Flooding page](#).

5.1.3 Previous Integration of Hazard Mitigation into Planning Mechanisms

Rice County and its incorporated communities are encouraged to integrate relevant information from this mitigation plan into their other planning mechanisms. This demonstrates local progress in mitigation efforts and strengthens the overall mitigation planning process. As part of this plan update, communities were asked to report whether and how information from the 2019 plan was incorporated into their existing plans, policies, programs, partnerships, or other documents. The following provides an overview of their responses.

Rice County

Rice County has worked to integrate the 2019 Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan across county departmental efforts. Rice County Emergency Management and Rice County Public Health have worked cooperatively to conduct public awareness campaigns to encourage residents to sign up for the county's Everbridge Emergency Notification System. Rice County Public Health has also instituted a rating system for vulnerable Home Care clients so we know how to reach out to them in events of disaster. Rice County Emergency Management continued

to promote and participate in the MN Homeland Security & Emergency Management's "Severe Weather Awareness Week" held in April of each year. Rice County Public Health also continued ongoing efforts for community outreach related to emergency preparedness. Public Health actively participates in National Emergency Preparedness Month each September, providing outreach with information on severe weather. The Rice County Highway Department integrated the 2019 HMP flood mitigation focus by including mitigation factors into during reconstruction projects and project design of new bridges. Rice County Environmental Services – Planning & Zoning Department maintains and enforces the floodplain management and shoreland ordinances for the county. The department also assists county residents in determining whether their property is affected by an officially mapped flood area. Rice County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.

City of Dennison

The city of Dennison integrated the 2019 Rice County HMP into our efforts to improve emergency notification to residents by fixing our warning siren to ensure it was functional. We wanted to upgrade the siren, but doing so was a financial limitation for the city. The city Mayor/Emergency Manager also has continued to participate in National Weather Service SkyWarn training and is a trained StormSpotter. In December, 2022 the city partnered with the Nerstrand Fire Department to have a second fire station located in Dennison. This supports the city's capabilities for all-hazards emergency response.

City of Dundas

The city integrated the Rice County 2019 HMP by using our city website to encourage residents to sign up for emergency notifications; Participating in Severe Weather Awareness Week using our city website; Using CIP funds the City has completed stormwater pond cleaning and maintenance projects.

City of Faribault

The City of Faribault integrated the Rice County 2019 HMP by using our city website to encourage residents to sign up for emergency notifications; Participating in Severe Weather Awareness Week using our city website and Facebook page; We have enforced the city's floodplain ordinance and the regulations for new development. In 2023 the city added an outdoor warning siren to our existing system to cover an uncovered part of our city. We continue to enforce building codes to ensure resilience in new construction and remodeling projects. Our Engineering Department implemented stormwater improvements and other flood mitigation projects.

City of Lonsdale

The city of Lonsdale has integrated the Rice County 2019 HMP into our increased focus on public outreach and implementation of a Citizens Alert Program. We use our city website and Facebook page to encourage residents to sign up for both the county Everbridge system and the city's emergency alert system. Since the last plan update the city has also continued to

focus on local flood mitigation. We have identified and addressed flooding issues by increasing the storm sewer capacity during street construction projects.

City of Morristown

The city of Morristown has integrated the 2019 Rice County HMP into our local flood mitigation efforts by continuing to enforce our local floodplain ordinance. Our last two street projects have taken into consideration the large rain events we have had, and increased the size of our storm pipe accordingly. We have also worked with Rice Soil and Water Conservation District to do a study of the Cannon River and flooding issues in that area. We have continued to participate annually in SkyWarn training with Rice County Emergency Management and the National Weather Service.

City of Nerstrand

Since the adoption of the 2019 Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan, the City of Nerstrand has taken several steps to support hazard mitigation goals. While the plan has not been formally adopted into city ordinances or the comprehensive plan, the city has integrated key elements into public works improvements, outreach efforts, and partnerships. These include:

1. Public Works Projects
 - The city constructed a new fire station, strengthening emergency response capabilities and enhancing community safety.
 - The leaking roof on City Hall was repaired, helping ensure the continuity of local government operations and the protection of essential facilities during severe weather events.
2. Education and Outreach Efforts
 - The City and Fire Department utilize their social media platforms to regularly communicate hazard awareness and preparedness messages to residents. This includes sharing emergency updates and promoting public safety initiatives.
3. Partnerships
 - The City of Nerstrand works closely with Rice County Emergency Management to receive technical assistance and guidance on hazard preparedness and response strategies. This collaboration supports alignment with county-level mitigation efforts.
4. Planning and Preparedness Initiatives
 - The Fire Department is currently developing a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) focused on enhancing preparedness and resilience. This forward-looking plan will help identify and prioritize projects that align with the community's hazard mitigation goals.

These actions reflect the city's commitment to integrating hazard mitigation into ongoing operations and planning. Although no formal policy or ordinance changes have been made, the

city continues to incorporate the intent and objectives of the 2019 Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan through practical implementation and strategic coordination.

City of Northfield

The City of Northfield has integrated the Rice County Hazard Mitigation plan through a variety of actions. The HMP is integrated into the City's Comprehensive Plan, Climate Action Plan, Emergency Operations Plans, and other studies that prepare the city for future hazards through preparedness, outreach, adaptation, and resilience.

5.1.4 Plans and Programs in Place to Address Natural Hazards

Rice County has numerous plans and programs in place to address natural hazards. Some of these programs are specific to a hazard and others address impacts and human safety for many types of events ("All-Hazards"). To group related natural hazards, "Summer Storms" encompasses Tornadoes, Windstorms, Lightning, and Hail. The plans and programs in place by Rice County to support mitigation for the hazards addressed in this plan are described as follows:

All Hazards

State Building Code Enforcement: Rice County Environmental Services Planning and Zoning – Building Division administers the Minnesota State Building Code and ensures that all construction in unincorporated areas of the county comply with building regulations.

All Hazards Emergency Operations Plan: Rice County Emergency Management maintains an all-hazards Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) which lays out concepts and operating guidelines for all incident management and support functions that may be needed to ensure life safety, incident stabilization, and property preservation during an incident and the transition to recovery.

Emergency Notification System: Rice County maintains the Everbridge Emergency Notification System which allows residents and visitors to sign up ("opt-in") to receive severe weather alerts targeted to their location, along with other local emergency alerts. A link to sign up for the system is located on the Rice County Emergency Management website page. Rice County also uses IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert Warning System), which allows for targeted and county-wide emergency notifications to both residents and visitors (not an "opt-in" service).

Preparedness Outreach & Education: Rice County Emergency Management utilizes the Rice County website, Rice County Sheriff's Office website page, and local news media to communicate with the public on emergency preparedness, severe weather, and other hazard conditions throughout the year. The Rice County Emergency Management website page provides information and resource links for public education on emergency preparedness. The county also receives all products/statements issued by the National Weather Service, and in turn shares or incorporates these into its community outreach and public education. Promotion of the use of NOAA weather radios occurs during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness Week as well as throughout the year. Rice County Emergency Management provides special

presentations or other planning assistance as requested to local governments, schools, or other local organizations and facilities within the county.

Mass Care Sheltering: In the event of a disaster where temporary sheltering is needed, Rice County Emergency Management works in coordination with Rice County Public Health, the American Red Cross, and local governments/Fire & EMS to provide mass care services as needed. The county EOP includes plans, procedures, and resources available for mass care sheltering.

Backup Power: Rice County works to ensure the continuity of operations of county government services and critical infrastructure in the event of an extended power outage. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to assess where backup power is needed and to obtain emergency generators.

Schools Support: Rice County Emergency Management coordinates with local school districts as needed on related emergency planning and preparedness, including support for specific trainings, exercises, equipment, and relay of county-level emergency notifications. School districts have their own policies, decision-making protocols, and communications plans in place to determine the need to close school and to notify targeted audiences in the event of severe weather, extreme temperatures, or other events that pose risk to students and staff.

Regional Collaboration: Rice County Emergency Management works closely with the neighboring emergency managers on a range of planning, training, and exercises to support all-hazards preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities. Rice County Emergency Management also works closely with our regional National Weather Service (NWS) office, having access to all live and on-demand briefings, announcements, and educational opportunities, and contact information for direct collaboration as needed.

Severe Winter Storms

Winter Weather Statements (Watch, Advisory, Warning, etc.): Rice County Emergency Management works to relay winter weather statements received from the NWS to help alert residents and visitors to hazardous conditions.

Winter Hazard Awareness Week: Rice County participates in the Winter Hazard Awareness Week campaign sponsored by MN HSEM and the National Weather Service each November. The week-long effort provides specific information each day covering the topics of winter weather, outdoor winter safety, indoor winter safety, and winter driving safety. Rice County Emergency Management promotes and shares information during the week via social media and area news media. Communities, schools, churches or other civic programs are encouraged to share locally.

Snow Removal & Ice Control: The Rice County Highway Department conducts winter road maintenance on county roads in accordance with the Rice County Snow and Ice Control Policy.

Other road jurisdictions conduct winter road maintenance on their respective road systems in accordance with each of their established policy and/or practice.

Severe Summer Storms

Severe Weather Statements (Watch, Advisory, Warning, etc.): Rice County works to relay severe spring and summer weather statements (such as for thunderstorms, windstorms, or tornadoes) received from the NWS to help alert residents and visitors to hazardous conditions.

Outdoor Warning Sirens: Outdoor warning sirens are located throughout the county and are tested monthly by the Rice County Sheriff's Office in coordination with local jurisdictions. Warning sirens are owned and maintained by the cities where they are located..

Skywarn® Program: Rice County Emergency Management works with the National Weather Service to offer Storm Spotter training on an annual basis to local fire and law enforcement departments and area residents that wish to be trained as spotters. SkyWarn Storm Spotters help to keep their local communities safe by providing timely and accurate reports of severe weather to their local NWS office.

Severe Weather Awareness Week: Rice County participates in the Severe Weather Awareness Week campaign sponsored by MN HSEM and the NWS each April. The week-long effort provides specific information each day covering the topics of severe weather alerts and warnings, lightning, hail, floods, tornadoes (with statewide drills), and extreme heat. Each topic covered includes factsheets, checklists, data, and other resources. Rice County Emergency Management promotes and shares information during the week via social media with communities, schools, churches or other civic programs are encouraged to share locally.

Vegetation Management: The Rice County Highway Department conducts vegetation management along county roads to reduce the risk of downed trees or branches resulting from severe spring and summer storm events. Local road authorities and electric utility providers also work to manage vegetation near power lines to reduce the risk of downed lines and power outages.

Extreme Cold

Emergency Notifications: Extreme cold temperature warnings are issued by the National Weather Service. Rice County Emergency Management works to relay extreme cold temperature warnings from the NWS to help alert residents and visitors to hazardous conditions. The Rice County Emergency Management Office also encourages residents to follow local news or NWS weather applications to receive severe weather and extreme temperature notifications.

Extreme Cold Safety Awareness: Rice County Emergency Management and Rice County Public Health promote public awareness of personal safety measure to take during periods of extreme cold, such as sharing information via Facebook posts.

Emergency Sheltering: In the event of an extended power outage coupled with a period of extreme cold, Rice County Emergency Management will work with Rice County Public Health and local Fire or EMS agencies as needed to assist vulnerable residents such as the elderly who may need temporary sheltering.

Extreme Heat

Emergency Notifications: Extreme heat temperature warnings are issued by the National Weather Service. Rice County Emergency Management works to relay extreme heat temperature warnings from the NWS to help alert residents and visitors to hazardous conditions. The Rice County Emergency Management Office also encourages residents to follow local news or NWS weather applications to receive severe weather and extreme temperature notifications.

Extreme Heat Safety Awareness: Rice County Emergency Management and Rice County Public Health promote public awareness of personal safety measure to take during periods of extreme heat, such as sharing information via Facebook posts.

Emergency Sheltering: In the event a period of extreme heat, Rice County Emergency Management will work with Rice County Public Health and local Fire or EMS agencies as needed to assist vulnerable residents such as the elderly who may need temporary sheltering.

Drought

Public Awareness & Outreach: In the event of extreme drought conditions, Rice County works in concert with the NWS, MN DNR, and local communities to raise public awareness of drought conditions and recommended water use restrictions as per MN DNR guidance.

Precipitation Monitoring: The Rice County SWCD participates in the MNgage Minnesota Volunteer Precipitation Observing Program, which is administered by the DNR Minnesota State Climatology Office. Data collected by volunteers is entered into a database for various studies and weather prediction simulations, including the assessment of drought severity and impacts.

Flooding

Floodplain Management: Rice County Flood Plain Management Ordinance Chapter 525 establishes the floodplain district and zoning regulations and conditional uses permitted within the floodway, flood fringe, and general floodplain districts within the county. The Rice County Environmental Services – Planning & Zoning Department maintains and enforces the floodplain management ordinance for the county. The department also assists county residents in determining whether their property is affected by an officially mapped flood area. Rice County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program.

Shoreland Ordinance: Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 516 establishes allowable uses and development standards in shoreland areas designated within the county.

Subdivision Ordinance: Rice County Zoning Ordinances, Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 523, is established to regulate the subdividing of land in Rice County.

Transportation Plan: Rice County's 2025-34 Transportation Improvement Plan outlines the priorities and scheduling of road, bridge, and other projects that include localized flood risk reduction efforts.

Minnesota Buffer Law: The Rice County SWCD administers the state Buffer Law and provides technical assistance on buffer compliance by landowners. Buffers benefit bank stabilization and reduced erosion and sedimentation into ditches, streams, rivers, and lakes.

One-Watershed One Plan (1w1P): Rice County SWCD participates in the Cannon River 1W1P. This plan address regional watershed planning which include measures for flood mitigation.

Dam/Levee Failure

King Mill Dam EAP: Rice County owns, inspects, and maintains the King Mill Dam located on the Cannon River in the City of Faribault. The county has an Emergency Action Plan for the dam which includes the potential inundation area in the event of dam failure, along with procedures in place for emergency notification and evacuation. The county and city work together to review and update the EAP as needed on an annual basis.

5.2 Mitigation Goals

The goals and strategies for natural hazards in the 2024 Minnesota State Hazard Mitigation Plan were adopted for use in the Rice County Plan. This framework, as outlined below, will allow for integration of the mitigation actions that are listed by Rice County and its jurisdictions into the state plan. The state will then be able to develop a statewide strategy that will benefit all of Minnesota.

Flooding Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss and economic disruption due to all types of flooding (riverine, flash, coastal, dam/levee failure).

Wildfire Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss, natural resource and economic disruption due to wildfires (forest, prairie, grass, and peat bogs).

Windstorms Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss, and economic disruption due to windstorms.

Hail Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property damage, and economic disruption due to hailstorms.

Winter Storms Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss, and economic disruption due to winter storms (blizzard, ice, and ice storm).

Lightning Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property losses, loss of services, and economic disruption due to lightning.

Tornado Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss, and economic disruption due to tornadoes.

Drought Goal: Reduce economic loss and environmental impacts due to drought.

Extreme Heat Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, and economic disruption due to extreme heat.

Extreme Cold Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, and economic disruption due to extreme cold.

Dam/Levee Failure Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss, natural resource and economic disruption due to dam/levee failure.

Erosion/Landslide/Mudslide Goal: Reduce deaths, injuries, property loss, and economic disruption due to hillside, coastal, bluff: caused primarily by oversaturation of soil.

5.3 Mitigation Action and Project Strategies

The mitigation actions in this plan are summarized into four main strategy types, as described in the FEMA publications *Local Mitigation Planning Handbook (2013)* and *Mitigation Ideas: A Resource for Reducing Risk to Natural Hazards (2013)*. Minnesota HSEM determined a fifth strategy type for use within the state: Mitigation Preparedness and Response. The strategies and example actions are listed in Table 13.

Table 13. Mitigation strategies and action types

Mitigation Strategy	Description	Example Mitigation Actions
Local Plans and Regulations	These actions include government authorities, policies, or codes, that influence the way land and buildings are developed and built.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive plans • Land use ordinances • Planning and zoning • Building codes and enforcement • Floodplain ordinances • NFIP Community Rating System • Capital improvement programs • Open space preservation • Shoreline codes • Stormwater management regulations and master plans
Structure and Infrastructure Projects	<p>These actions involve modifying existing structures and infrastructure to protect them from a hazard or remove them from a hazard area. This could apply to public or private structures as well as critical facilities and infrastructure.</p> <p>This type of action also involves projects to construct manmade structures to reduce the impact of hazards.</p> <p>Many of these types of actions are projects eligible for funding through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisitions and elevations of structures in flood-prone areas • Utility undergrounding • Structural retrofits • Floodwalls and retaining walls • Detention and retention structures • Culverts • Safe rooms
Natural Systems Protection	These are actions that minimize damage and losses and also preserve or restore the functions of natural systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sediment and erosion control • Stream corridor restoration • Forest management • Conservation easements • Wetland restoration and preservation

Mitigation Strategy	Description	Example Mitigation Actions
Education and Awareness Programs	These are actions to inform and educate residents, elected officials, and property owners about hazards and potential ways to mitigate them. These actions may also include participation in national programs, such as StormReady or Firewise Communities. Although this type of mitigation reduces risk less directly than structural projects or regulation, it is an important foundation. A greater understanding and awareness of hazards and risk among local officials, stakeholders, and the public is more likely to lead to direct actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio or television spots • Websites with maps and information • Real estate disclosure • Presentations to school groups or neighborhood organizations • Mailings to residents in hazard-prone areas. • StormReady Certification • Firewise Communities
Mitigation Preparedness and Response	This is a State of Minnesota mitigation strategy with the intent of covering preparation and actions that protect life and property during a natural disaster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency operations plan • Flood fight plans and preparedness • Dam emergency action plans • Warning • Backup power • Emergency capabilities

Local leaders work together with the Rice County emergency management director to assure that the hazards and mitigation actions included in this plan are accurate and addressed in their jurisdictions. Development of mitigation actions for the county and each city was informed by a community’s hazard and risk assessment; identification of local vulnerabilities, and review of capabilities in place to address mitigation. Planning team members, local elected officials and staff from Rice County and each city actively participated in the development and review of mitigation action charts for implementation through participation in planning team meetings (see Appendix F) and development of Local Mitigation Surveys (see Appendix C). Additional jurisdictional and public feedback was incorporated following news releases inviting public input to the planning process (see Appendix G).

The Rice County risks and mitigation activities identified also incorporate the concerns and needs of townships, school districts, and other entities participating in this plan. Appendix H contains the jurisdictional mitigation action charts for participating cities.

[See Mitigation Actions for all jurisdictions and provide ongoing feedback on the HMP website](#)

The following is an overview of the mitigation action charts and a description of each element of the chart.

Number (#)

Each mitigation action is identified by a number.

Hazard

Each mitigation action is identified by the natural hazard it relates to. Actions that fall under “All Hazards” relate to both natural and non-natural hazards. “Severe Winter Storms” includes blizzards,

heavy snow, ice storms, winter storms, and winter weather. “Severe Summer Storms” includes windstorms, tornadoes, lightning, and hail.

Mitigation Strategy

Each mitigation action is identified by one of the following five mitigation strategies.

- Local Planning and Regulations
- Structure and Infrastructure Projects
- Natural Systems Protection
- Education and Awareness Programs
- Mitigation Preparedness and Response Support

See Table 13 for a description of each mitigation strategy and related types of actions.

Mitigation Action

Each mitigation action provides a concise, action-oriented description of the action or project to be undertaken that will help to reduce or eliminate future risk, including in areas with existing or new development.

Status

The status of each mitigation action is indicated by one of the following categories:

- New – New actions that have been identified since the last plan.
- Existing – Actions that are carried over from the last plan or have been updated.
- In Progress – Actions from the last plan that are currently being acted upon.

Mitigation actions that have been completed or deleted from the 2019 Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan are identified and reported on in Appendix H. Completed and deleted mitigation actions are not carried over into the updated mitigation action chart.

Priority

In the review and discussion of selected mitigation strategies and actions, the planning team ranked mitigation actions by priority for implementation. Table 14 provides criteria that were taken into consideration in the process.

Table 14. Criteria for Mitigation Action Priority Ranking

Ranking	Criteria
High Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods for reducing risk from the hazard are technically reliable. • The jurisdiction has experience in implementing mitigation measures. • Mitigation measures are eligible under federal grant programs. • There are multiple mitigation measures for the hazard. • The mitigation measure(s) are known to be cost-effective. • The mitigation measures protect lives and property for a long period or are permanent risk reduction solutions.

Ranking	Criteria
Moderate Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation methods are established. • The jurisdiction has limited experience with the types of measures that may be appropriate to mitigate the hazard. • Some mitigation measures are eligible for federal grants. • There is a limited range of effective mitigation measures for the hazard. • Mitigation measures are cost-effective only in limited circumstances. • Mitigation measures are effective for a reasonable period.
Low Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods for reducing risk from the hazard are not well-established, are not proven reliable, or are experimental. • The jurisdiction has little or no experience in implementing mitigation measures, and/or no technical knowledge of them. • Mitigation measures are ineligible under federal grant programs. • There is a very limited range of mitigation measures for the hazard, usually only one feasible alternative. • The mitigation measure(s) have not been proven cost-effective and are likely to be very expensive compared to the magnitude of the hazard. • The long-term effectiveness of the measure is not known or is known to be relatively poor.

Time frame

Each mitigation action identifies the anticipated timeframe for implementation within the next five-year planning cycle. If a mitigation action is considered an ongoing effort, the next five-year period in which the activity would occur is listed. If a mitigation activity has a defined period for implementation (e.g., a specific year), it will be noted.

Responsibility

Each mitigation action identifies what personnel, department, or agency will serve as lead for the administration or implementation of the action.

Comments on Implementation & Integration

Each mitigation action provides a description of how the jurisdiction will work to implement the mitigation action and incorporate the activity into other existing planning mechanisms. This can include description of methods for public outreach, enforcement of policies, development of plans, and coordination of key staff and partnership efforts.

Possible Funding

Each mitigation action identifies potential funding sources to support implementation of the mitigation activity, such as existing county or city funding, or state or federal funding. Projects that may be eligible for future FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding are noted.

5.3.1 Rice County Mitigation Action Chart

The Rice County Mitigation Action Chart is provided in Table 15 at the end of this section. Appendix H provides the mitigation action charts developed for each city participating in the 2025 HMP update. A

report on the status of mitigation actions related to natural hazards included in the 2019 plan update can be found in Appendix E.

[See Mitigation Actions for all jurisdictions and provide ongoing feedback on the HMP website](#)

Table 15. Rice County Mitigation Action Chart, 2026–2031

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Utilize effective methods to share information with the community about severe weather, extreme temperatures, and personal preparedness.	Existing High 2026-2031	Rice County Emergency Management (RCEM)	RCEM utilizes the Rice County website, Rice County Sheriff’s Office website page, Rice County social media, and local news media to communicate with the public on emergency preparedness, severe weather, and other hazard conditions throughout the year. RCEM helps promote and participates in Severe Weather Awareness week held in April of each year. Rice County Public Health conducts community outreach related to emergency preparedness, safety kits, utilizes Facebook postings, and annually puts out a press release on extreme heat.	Internal: RCEM and RCPH budgets External: FEMA EMGP
2	All Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Conduct outreach to encourage residents to opt-in for the county’s emergency notification system.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM	Rice County maintains the Everbridge Emergency Notification System which allows residents and visitors to sign up (“opt-in”) to receive severe weather alerts targeted to their location, along with other local emergency alerts. Rice County encourages residents to sign up by promoting it on social media, radio, and outreach events. An icon is located on the Rice County website that leads to the sign-up page. RC Public Health also promotes sign up for the county’s Citizens Alert system.	Internal: RCEM Dept. budget External: FEMA EMGP
3	All Hazards	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Work to improve delivery of information to vulnerable populations within the county, including those who speak English as a second language, the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing communities.	New High 2026-2031	RCEM, RCPH	Rice County Public Health has instituted a rating system for vulnerable Home Care clients so we know how to reach out to them in events of disaster. Rice County EM and PH are also working to address how to expand delivery of emergency notifications in different languages (Spanish, Somali). To ensure inclusivity, we will also seek ways to expand delivery of emergency information in American Sign Language (ASL) for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing communities. This will fall under our broader Rice County Emergency Management program.	Internal: RCEM, RCPH budgets External: MDH, FEMA EMPG

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
4	All Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Adopt and enforce regulations governing new construction to prevent damage to buildings and infrastructure from severe weather events.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	RC Envr. Services	The RC Environmental Services/Building Division administers the State Building Code and ensures that all construction in the unincorporated areas of the county comply with proper building regulations.	Internal: RC General Op. Fund – Environmental services budget
5	All Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Implement existing plans and policies in place that help to mitigate against the impacts of flooding and other natural hazards to future development.	Existing High 2026-2031	RC Envr. Services, RC Hwy. Dept.	Rice County has the following plans and policies in place that help to integrate hazard mitigation: Comprehensive Plan 2021-2040, Rice County Highway Department TIP 2024-2033 Plan, Rice County Local Water Management Plan (2014-2019), Cannon River 1W1P, Rice County Flood Plain Management Ordinance Chapter 525, and Shoreland Ordinance - Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 516.	Internal: RC General Op. Fund, RC Highway and Environmental services budgets
6	All Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Utilize departmental staff and elected officials to work together to accomplish identified mitigation efforts.	Existing High 2026-2031	RC inter-departmental	Rice County has a full time Emergency Management Director, Environmental Services Dept, Sheriff’s Office, Highway Dept. Engineer that all work together on related planning. Rice County Public Health also has a full-time Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.	Internal: RC General Op. Fund (cross dept)
7	All Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Develop and sustain partnerships with outside agencies, organizations, businesses, and neighboring jurisdictions to accomplish mitigation efforts.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with other county depts and agency partners	Rice County has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to assist with emergency response. We have worked with MNDOT, HSEM, and Rice SWCD on mitigation efforts in the past. Multiple county departments have assisted in past flooding events, as well as community volunteers and the American Red Cross. RCEM works closely with neighboring emergency managers as well as the National Weather Service.	Internal: RCEM Dept. budget External: MnDOT SWCD cost share FEMA HMGP

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
8	All Hazards	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure the county's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is updated and addresses policies & procedures needed to support EM functions prior to, during, and following a disaster.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM	Rice County Emergency Management maintains an all-hazards Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) which lays out concepts and operating guidelines for all incident management and support functions that may be needed to ensure life safety, incident stabilization, and property preservation during an incident and the transition to recovery.	Internal: RCEM Dept. budget External: FEMA EMGP
9	All Hazards	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Identify critical infrastructure or facilities that need backup generators and work to obtain them.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with other county depts.	Rice County out shops and the County Courthouse do not have generators to support operations during power outages. The county will work to purchase generators for these locations as internal funding is available. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to assess where backup power is needed and to obtain emergency generators.	Internal: RC General Op. Fund, RC Hwy. Dept. External: Local Govt funding
10	All Hazards	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Utilize GIS technology and database management to identify vulnerable populations within the community.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM, RCPH in coord with RC GIS Dept.	RC Emergency Management will work with RC PH/SS and GIS dept. to list/map known locations of facilities that house special needs populations such as long-term care facilities, hospitals, and day care facilities.	Internal: RC GIS dept funding
11	All Hazards	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure that plans, procedures, and designated facilities are in place to provide temporary sheltering due to a severe weather or other disaster event.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM, Public Health	In the event of a disaster where temporary sheltering is needed, Rice County Emergency Management works in coordination with Rice County Public Health, the American Red Cross, and local governments/Fire & EMS to provide mass care services as needed. The county EOP includes plans, procedures, and resources available for mass care sheltering.	Internal: RCEM, RCPH funding External: Red Cross, Local Gov't funding

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
12	All Hazards	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Encourage schools and other facilities that house seniors or other vulnerable populations to have emergency plans in place to deal with severe weather, extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with local jurisdictions	RCEM continues to work with local jurisdictions provide outreach to and support to schools and other facilities on emergency planning. Schools and long-term care (LTC) facilities are required to have such plans in place. RCEM provides direct training or planning support as requested.	Internal: RCEM, RCPH budgets External: School Districts, Private LTC Facilities
13	All Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Identify and work to secure internal as well as external funding (grant or loan sources) to help accomplish mitigation activities in the county.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	RCEM, Other County depts as related	Rice County utilizes a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to guide the long-term planning and funding of county infrastructure projects. Rice County has received FEMA Mitigation funds as well as MN DNR grants and private sector funding opportunities in the past for mitigation efforts. Rice County Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grants have been used to cover our Emergency Preparedness Coordinator position and outreach materials.	Internal: RC General Fund, RCEM, RC Hwy. Dept. External: FEMA EMPG, FEMA HMGP, MN DNR FHM, USDA CF
14	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce policies and ordinances that address development in high-risk flood areas.	Existing High 2026-2031	RC Envr. Services (P&Z)	Rice County Flood Plain Management Ordinance Chapter 525 establishes the floodplain district and zoning regulations and conditional uses permitted within the floodway, flood fringe, and general floodplain districts within the county. The Rice County Environmental Services – Planning & Zoning Department maintains and enforces the floodplain management ordinance for the county. Rice County GIS Dept. maintains the floodplain maps for the county.	Internal: RC Envr. Services Dept. (RC General Op. Fund)
15	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations	Work with area watershed organizations to address mitigation plans and projects that address risk reduction for localized flooding and erosion.	Existing High 2026-2031	Rice SWCD	Rice County SWCD participates in the Cannon River 1W1P. This plan addresses regional watershed planning which include measures for flood mitigation.	External: Rice SWCD cost share funding, MN BWSR

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
16	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations / Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Plan for and implement measures to address flood risk reduction projects for roads, bridges, and culverts throughout the county.	Existing High 2026-2031	RC Hwy. Dept.	Rice County's 2025-34 Transportation Improvement Plan outlines the priorities and scheduling of road, bridge, and other projects that include localized flood risk reduction efforts. The RC Hwy. Depts has identified the following priority issues associated with the impacts of high rain events: There are 73.9 miles of gravel roads washing away during excessive rainfall. 500 miles of aggregate shoulders washing away on are 355 miles of paved roadways. At least 7 roadway areas that close due to high water impacts from lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands. There is one road that keeps sliding into a lake. The Hwy. Dept. plans to pave road shoulders as part of future roadway improvements; including both rehabilitation and reconstruction projects.	Internal: Rice County CIP funding
17	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations	Conduct property buyouts to acquire homes affected by repetitive flooding and physically relocate or remove those homes to eliminate future flood damages.	Existing Low 2026-2031	RCEM	There are currently no potential property buyout projects identified by Rice County. The county will continue to evaluate and assist with any potential future acquisition projects and application to FEMA or MN DNR for grant funding to conduct buyouts.	External: FEMA HMGP, MN DNR FHM grant programs
18	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations / Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Implement measures to improve flood/stormwater control systems throughout Rice County.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM Hwy. Dept. in coord with Township Govt's and SWCD	The RC Highway Dept., Townships and the Rice SWCD oversee monitoring and maintenance of storm water control systems within the County, and work with local municipalities on stormwater system improvements. Rural residential development is increasing stormwater runoff. Townships are working to address this issue where needed. External grant funding to support stormwater improvement projects may be available through avenues such as the MN DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation Grants, MPCA, and FEMA HMA funding for flood reduction projects.	Internal: RC Hwy. Dept. budget External: Twp. Govt's; FEMA, MPCA grants

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
19	Severe Winter Storms	Local Planning & Regulations	Implement snow removal and ice control to ensure the safety of county roads impacted by winter storms.	Existing High 2026-2031	RC Highway Dept.	The Rice County Highway Department conducts winter road maintenance on county roads in accordance with the Rice County Snow and Ice Control Policy. Other road jurisdictions conduct winter road maintenance on their respective road systems in accordance with each of their established policy and/or practice.	Internal: RC Hwy. Dept. budget
20	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Work with the National Weather Service (NWS) to provide SkyWarn training and develop a network of trained Storm Spotters throughout the county.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with NWS and local SkyWarn Groups	RCEM works with the NWS to offer this training on an annual basis to local fire and law enforcement departments and local residents that wish to be trained as spotters.	Internal: RCEM Budget External: NWS, Rice County Skywarn.
21	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure outdoor warning sirens are located where needed and functioning properly.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with local jurisdictions	Rice County has warning sirens located throughout the county. RC Emergency Management, the County PSAP and each city participate in statewide testing of emergency sirens as well as testing them on the first Wednesday of each month. Rice County also activates a weekly “growl” test on 22 of its sirens.	Internal: RCEM RC Sheriff’s Office funding External: HSEM
22	Severe Summer Storms	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Address the need for the construction of storm shelters or tornado safe rooms in areas where residents or visitors are vulnerable to high wind events, such as mobile home parks and campgrounds.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM, RC Parks & Facilities in coord with local jurisdictions	RCEM and RC Parks & Facilities have identified the following areas as priorities for evaluation for safe room construction or retrofit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McCullough Park and Campground • Work with all colleges and public schools to assess need & potential for new construction or retrofit • Rice County Public Schools • Rice County Fairgrounds • Mobile Home Parks <p>Grant funding may be available for tornado safe rooms from FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant program funding, based on application approval.</p>	Internal: RC Parks & Facilities funding External: Local Gov’ts, FEMA HMGP safe room grant

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
23	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Encourage municipal and rural electric cooperatives to address burying powerlines or strengthening power poles to avoid power outages from high wind events and storms.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM, local jurisdictions in coord with electric utility providers	Rice County and all cities will work as needed with their appropriate utility providers as needed to evaluate areas of concern. Potential project areas will be evaluated to see where putting lines underground may be feasible and make sense.	External: Electric Coops, FEMA HMGP grant
24	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Natural Systems Protection	Regularly inspect and trim trees near power lines to reduce power outages due to falling tree limbs during storms.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	Highway Dept., Local Utility Providers	Tree management in the right-of-way of County/City roads is addressed by the respective utility companies in their service area as well as RC Highway Dept./City Public Works. Townships within Rice County also complete tree management within their road areas.	Internal: RC Hwy. Dept External: Utility Coops
25	Extreme Cold/Heat Temps	Education & Awareness Programs	Provide outreach and education to the public on personal safety measures to take during periods of extreme cold or extreme heat.	In-Progress High 2026-2031	RCEM & RC Public Health	RCEM works to share information received from the National Weather Service when periods of extreme cold or heat are forecast and occurring. RCEM utilizes the county EM website page, and EM Facebook. Local radio and TV stations also provide this information to the public. School Districts have plans and policies in place for delaying or closing school to protect students from extreme temps.	Internal: RCEM, RCPH budgets External: School District Budgets
26	Extreme Cold/Heat Temps	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Work with local jurisdictions to plan for temporary warming/cooling facilities and promote their use for those that are vulnerable to extremely heat or cold temperatures (i.e., homeless, elderly)	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with PH and local govt's	RCEM addresses planning for extreme temperature sheltering within the county EOP and in coordination with Rice County Public Health and local jurisdictions. Designated facilities in the county are identified for use for emergency warming/cooling centers.	Internal: RCEM/PH Budgets External: Local Govt's, Red Cross
27	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations	Continue to participate in the MnGAGE precipitation monitoring program to help track and report data related to periods of drought.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	SWCD	Rice County SWCD participates in the MNGage Minnesota Volunteer Precipitation Observing Program, which is administered by the DNR Minnesota State Climatology Office.	External: SWCD, MN DNR

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
28	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations	Encourage communities to establish and enforce watering restrictions during drought conditions and raise public awareness of water conservation measures.	Existing High 2026-2031	RCEM in coord with MN DNR and local jurisdictions	Rice County encourages city and townships to promote drought awareness to residents on limiting non-essential water usage. Local communities will be encouraged to establish watering restrictions as per MN DNR guidelines during periods of severe drought.	Internal: RC General Op. Fund
29	Dam Failure	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work with the city of Faribault to address mitigation measures to stabilize the dam and prevent further erosion.	Existing High 2026-2031	City of Faribault (lead) in coord with RCEM	The dam is located on the Cannon River in the City of Faribault. RCEM is working with the city of Faribault to actively research mitigation projects. Updating, upgrading or even removal and replacement with another type of structure are all options being looked at. External funding sources also must be explored.	External: City of Faribault, Private Funding (Dam Owner)

Section 6 – Plan Maintenance

6.1 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Updating the Plan

The Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) should be considered a living document. The plan should be updated and approved by FEMA at least every five years. The guidance in this section will function as the primary tool when reviewing progress on the implementation of the Rice County HMP.

The Rice County emergency management director (EMD) is the individual responsible for leading all efforts to monitor, evaluate, and update the HMP within the five-year window. Throughout the five-year planning cycle, the Rice County EMD will work with an emergency managers group to help monitor, review, evaluate, and update the HMP. The group will include township representatives and designated city emergency managers from cities participating in the plan update, and include other city elected officials or staff as needed. Representatives from agencies or organizations that are involved with related mitigation work in the county as well as those that work with underserved communities or socially vulnerable populations will also be invited to participate in the group. The Rice County EMD will conduct quarterly outreach to and communicate with the group on emergency management matters regarding severe weather awareness, local preparedness, mitigation, and response & recovery as needed. Additional stakeholders will be added based on need or in response to severe weather events.

If necessary, the Rice County EMD will convene the group to meet more regularly to monitor plan implementation progress and reassess needs and opportunities. This could be done in response to funding cycles of programs that provide resources for hazard mitigation activities. If there is a need for a special meeting due to new developments or a declared disaster occurring in the county, the group will meet to update pertinent mitigation strategies. Depending on Rice County opportunities and fiscal resources, mitigation projects may be implemented independently by individual communities or through local partnerships.

The group will continue to review the HMP goals and objectives to determine their relevance to changing situations in Rice County. In addition, state and federal policies will be reviewed to ensure they are addressing current and expected conditions. The group will also review the risk assessment portion of the plan to determine if this information should be updated or modified. The parties responsible for the various implementation actions will report on the status of their projects, and will include which implementation processes worked well, any difficulties encountered, how coordination efforts are proceeding, and which strategies should be revised.

Updates or modifications to the HMP during the five-year planning process will require a public notice and a meeting prior to submitting revisions to the individual jurisdictions for approval. The plan will be updated via written changes, submissions as the group deems appropriate and necessary, and as approved by county commissioners.

During the five-year plan period, the EMD will require all relevant county departments and jurisdictions to report on the status of their mitigation actions using the worksheets provided in Appendix I. This information will be used to track progress for the next plan update. Additionally, the EMD will establish

and implement an HMP maintenance schedule. Forms for these purposes are drawn from FEMA's 2023 Local Mitigation Planning Handbook and can be found in Appendix I (FEMA, 2023a).

The EMD will also solicit feedback from the emergency managers group using the following prompts (also found in Appendix I):

- Are there any new representatives from jurisdictions, agencies, or organizations that you feel should be included in our stakeholder outreach?
- Do you feel your community has any new vulnerabilities that may be impacted by hazard events? (critical infrastructure, systems, or populations)
- Has your community identified any new mitigation activities that would help reduce risk to future hazard events?
- Are there any funding opportunities or other resources that may be available to help implement local mitigation activities?
- How is your community integrating information from the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms (such as plans, policies, or partnerships)?

6.2 Implementation

Rice County and its included municipalities share a common HMP and work together closely to develop, revise, and implement it. This HMP provides a comprehensive chart of mitigation actions for Rice County and its jurisdictions (see Appendix H and Section 5.3). The cities participating in the HMP planning process identified the specific mitigation strategies that they would seek to implement in their communities during the five-year planning cycle. These mitigation actions are provided in Appendix H.

Several implementation tools are available to address hazards. The strategies to use will be part of an ongoing discussion as Rice County looks for opportunities for plan implementation. The following tools will be considered:

Education: In many cases, education of residents has been identified as one of the most effective mitigation strategies.

Capital Investments: Capital investments such as fire and ambulance equipment, sprinkler systems, and dry hydrants are tools that can limit risks and impacts of natural and manmade hazards.

Data Collection and Needs Assessments: Data collection and needs assessments can aid in gaining a better understanding of threats and allow planning for mitigation strategies accordingly. As resources are limited for this part of the planning process, additional data collection is likely to be an ongoing activity as resources become available.

Coordination: Responsibilities for mitigation strategies run across various county departments, local fire and ambulance departments, city and township governments, and a host of state and federal agencies. Ongoing coordination is an important tool to ensure resources are used efficiently. Coordination can also avoid duplication of efforts or prevent gaps that are created because of unclear roles and responsibilities. The mitigation plan review process can function as a tool to have an ongoing discussion of roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for coordination.

Regional Cooperation: Counties and public safety services providers throughout the region often share similar challenges and concerns. In some cases, a regional approach may be warranted as a mitigation strategy in order to save resources. Mutual aid agreements are a tool already in use for a number of services. Needs assessments for fire and ambulance services and development of assistance for volunteer recruiting, training, and retention could benefit from a regional approach. Cooperation among counties could also help in lobbying for certain funding priorities that address concerns relating to challenges in service delivery in rural areas. Organizations such as FEMA Region 5 and the Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) through the Regional Program Director can offer tools and resources to assist in these cooperative efforts.

Regulation: Regulation is an important mitigation tool for Rice County. Regulation plays a vital role in land use, access to structures, and the protection of water resources and public health.

6.3 Continued Public Involvement

Continued public involvement is critical to the successful implementation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Rice County Emergency Management Director and the emergency managers group will continue to engage new public stakeholders in planning discussions and project implementation during the five-year cycle of this plan.

[The Rice County HMP website provides opportunities for continued public involvement and feedback](#)

To seek continued public participation after the plan has been approved and during the five-year window of implementation for this plan, Rice County will take the following measures:

- The Rice County HMP website link will be posted on the Rice County Emergency Management website. The website provides a PDF of the plan for download and an interactive experience for the public to understand the planning process, where county-specific vulnerabilities lie, national best practices, as well as a chance to submit feedback. Collected feedback will be reviewed during the five-year plan cycle and will be noted for future update of the plan or addressed as necessary.
- Following any major storms or natural disasters, Rice County Emergency Management will seek to gather concerns and new ideas for mitigation from local residents to include in the next update of the plan. This may be done through public meetings, outreach via social media, or news releases via local media.
- Each community participating in the plan will be responsible for keeping their local government, schools, and community members updated and engaged in the implementation of their respective mitigation action charts (see Appendix H or the Rice County HMP website). Each respective jurisdiction will be required to report on the status of mitigation actions in their charts to the Rice County EMD.
- Rice County and its jurisdictions will use numerous means of public outreach to engage new public stakeholders in providing input on mitigation concerns, including those from underserved communities or socially vulnerable populations. Outreach methods may include presentations at city council or township board meetings, sharing information at special

events, working with local schools and partner organizations, and posting information in areas that are used to communicate with the public (bulletin boards, websites, social media, and local media sources that communities use to inform and engage the public). As mitigation projects are implemented, jurisdictions will work to keep the public updated and engaged in those local efforts.

- To ensure an equitable outreach strategy continues after the plan is adopted, the planning team will continue to seek to engage with underserved and vulnerable populations during the next five years. This will vary across jurisdictions, as underserved or vulnerable populations will differ across the planning area. Methods of engagement will include those listed above, as well as working with partner agencies, local organizations, facilities, or community interest groups (e.g., schools, nursing homes, Rotary Club) to conduct more targeted outreach or presentations to share information on hazard mitigation and solicit for feedback on concerns and ideas.

Appendices

Appendix A – References

Appendix B – Adopting Resolutions

Appendix C – Local Mitigation Survey Report

Appendix D – Plans & Programs in Place

Appendix E – Past Mitigation Action Review Status Report

Appendix F – Planning Team Meetings

Appendix G – Public Outreach & Engagement Documentation

Appendix H – Mitigation Actions by Jurisdiction

Appendix I – Plan Maintenance & Monitoring Worksheets

Appendix A – References

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Appendix B – Adopting Resolutions

Appendix C – Local Mitigation Survey Report

Rice County

LOCAL MITIGATION SURVEY

As part of the Rice County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan update, the **Local Mitigation Survey (LMS)** Form is used to gather jurisdictionally-specific information that is used to meet FEMA requirements and to support development of local mitigation actions.

Jurisdictions to Complete LMS:

This form is to be completed by representatives from **Rice County** and the **cities of Dennison, Dundas, Faribault, Lonsdale, Morristown, Nerstrand, and Northfield.**

Additional stakeholders on the Rice County HMP contact list are also invited to provide feedback to this form in the designated areas. (See “Other Stakeholders” section with each question).

LMS - Main Point of Contact (Name, Work Title, and Email)

Rice County	Joseph Johnson, Rice County Director of Emergency Management joseph.johnson@RiceCountyMN.gov Martha Sykes, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Martha.Sykes@RiceCountyMN.gov
City of Dennison	Jeffrey Flaten, Mayor, jflaten19@gmail.com
City of Dundas	Jenelle Teppen, City Administrator jteppen@dundas.us
City of Faribault	Dustin Dienst, Director of Fire and Code Services ddienst@ci.faribault.mn.us
City of Lonsdale	Joel Erickson, City Administrator jerickson@lonsdalemn.com
City of Morristown	Ellen Judd, City Administrator ejudd@ci.morristown.mn.us
City of Nerstrand	Joe Johnson, Fire Chief, nerstrandfire@gmail.com
City of Northfield	P.T. Haider, Deputy Chief, paul.haider@northfieldmn.gov
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6, Chad Hanson, Emergency Management Coordinator, chad.hanson@state.mn.us

Review: Prioritization of Hazards

During the Rice County HMP Planning Team Meeting #1, participants determined the following natural hazards below to be of high, moderate, or low priority as they relate at a countywide level. Hazards noted as high or moderate priority are considered to be of greatest risk and concern, reflecting the frequency of past events, the probability of future events, and the severity of impacts that can occur. Hazards listed as a low priority are considered to be of lower risk and concern, reflecting an infrequency of past events and/or occurring without significant impacts to local vulnerabilities.

Prioritization of Hazards for 2025 Rice County Update

Natural Hazards	Current Priority
Flooding	High
Winter Storms	High
Tornadoes	High

Windstorms	Moderate
Hailstorms	Moderate
Lightning	Moderate
Extreme Cold	Moderate
Extreme Heat	Moderate
Drought	Moderate
Dam Failure	Moderate
Wildfire	Low
Landslides	Low

SURVEY QUESTIONS (1-15)

#1 - HAZARD IDENTIFICATION	
Does the priority level listed for any of the hazards in the table above differ for your jurisdiction? If so, please describe how.	
Rice County	Rice County Public Health recommended moving extreme heat from low priority to moderate priority. Rice County Emergency Management agreed and this was changed for the countywide priority ranking.
City of Dennison	I believe winter storms and flooding should not be in the high category, rather moderate.
City of Dundas	No changes
City of Faribault	I believe that tornadoes should be in the moderate category and extreme heat and extreme cold in the high category.
City of Lonsdale	Tornados may be moderate?
City of Morristown	No changes.
City of Nerstrand	No changes.
City of Northfield	No changes.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#2 - LOCAL VULNERABILITIES	
Describe any <u>specific</u> community assets (infrastructure, systems, or populations) that are susceptible to damage or loss from natural hazard events in your jurisdiction. Consider how recent severe storms or other natural hazard events have caused damages or threatened life safety to people in your community. Please list the natural hazards and related local vulnerabilities separately.	
Rice County	<p>All-Hazards: Not all people are signed up for Citizens Alert. Out shops and courthouse do not have generators to support operations during power outages.</p> <p>Flooding: (Rice County Hwy. Dept) There are 73.9 miles of gravel roads washing away during excessive rainfall. 500 miles of aggregate shoulders washing away on are 355 miles of paved roadways. At least 7 roadway areas that close due to high water impacts from lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands. There is one road that keeps sliding into a lake.</p>

City of Dennison	<p>Using our City Hall as a potential storm shelter. We are working on obtaining funding for a stand-alone generator for both City Hall and the Well House in case there is a catastrophic event and power is lost for an extended amount of time in town.</p> <p>Our pond system is vulnerable to flooding, which was evident in June of 2024. Three emergency discharges were performed to move all the treated water from our ponds.</p>
City of Dundas	<p>Severe Storms (Power Outages): Winter and Summer storms with ice and/or high winds can take out power. Electric utility is provided by overhead power lines which could impact the community.</p>
City of Faribault	<p>Flooding: We have identified most of our flooding vulnerabilities but lift stations are still one of our vulnerabilities that we have not mitigated.</p> <p>Dam Failure: In June, 2024 the Woolen Mill Dam suffered erosion damage from a high rain flooding event. The dam is located on the Cannon River in the City of Faribault. City crews worked to stabilize flood-related erosion on the north side of the dam located next to the Faribault Mill, south of Slevin Park. Assessment of the dam revealed the need to stabilize the area and to prevent additional erosion. Should the dam ever fail, roads and the city’s wastewater treatment plant would be affected.</p> <p>All Hazards: We have seen an uptick in our homeless population and any extreme weather (hot, cold) becomes more of an issue for them and us. Our 4 mobile home parks do have sheltering plans but they involve people driving to the shelter which is not the greatest if time does not allow. Disseminating warnings and other messages to non-English speaking citizens is an issue for us. Our senior population is growing and we see more and more issues with this population not having the resources to maintain even the most basic needs like heat, AC.</p>
City of Lonsdale	<p>Tornado- Multi and single level apartment complexes lack proper shelter and would have to travel to get to appropriate shelter.</p> <p>Winter Storms-ice storm, the city’s power service comes from overhead power lines with a portion of the city’s population receiving power from overhead power lines.</p>
City of Morristown	<p>Tornado - We do not have a tornado shelter in the mobile home park. Flooding - We have a river that runs through town that directly affects residents who live near the river.</p>
City of Nerstrand	<p>Generators - Fire Station is the designated shelter for community. There is a need for a dedicated generator for prolonged power outages.</p>
City of Northfield	<p>Flooding: Our downtown area is an area of concern for flooding. We have been working to mitigate risks.</p> <p>Tornadoes: The city has a significant amount of overhead power lines that are susceptible to windstorms and tornadoes.</p>

	<p>Tornado- We have two mobile home communities and they have storm shelters. We are also replacing one tornado siren each year. The City has a significant amount of overhead powerlines that are susceptible to tornadoes and wind storms</p> <p>With climate change, we will probably see more temperature swings related to winter storms, where we may see more ice storms in our area</p> <p>Also, related to climate changes more infestations such as emerald ash bore or another pests.</p>
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	<p>MnDOT District 6: We manage our State Highway System and it is vulnerable to many hazards listed above. The largest vulnerability for this infrastructure is observed trend in increasing extreme precipitation events (both intensity and frequency). The hydraulic assets under and upstream of the roads were designed based on outdated precipitation probabilities (typically TP-40 Design Storms since Atlas 14 was not used until about 10 years ago) and so the risk of damage and traffic impact is greater than originally designed.</p> <p>Additionally, there are no signs that the increasing trend of extreme precipitation will reverse, so even there is a good deal of uncertainty for the future, it suggests this infrastructure will continue to become more vulnerable.</p> <p>All populations that use the State Highway System have increased risk of traffic impacts, and we are working to quantify at a high-level certain areas that may have a larger share of that risk.</p>

#3 - REDUCTION IN VULNERABILITY	
In the last 5 years, has your jurisdiction taken any actions to <u>reduce</u> vulnerability against future severe weather or disaster events? Please describe.	
Rice County	<p>RCPH: We have undertaken the following efforts: Campaigns to increase awareness for Citizens Alert. Outreach with safety kits (including Citizens Alert) at various locations throughout Rice County in the summer. Attempts to bolster and strengthen membership volunteers in MN Responds. PH has instituted a rating system for vulnerable Home Care clients so we know how to reach out to them in events of disaster.</p> <p>Highway: During reconstruction projects and new bridges mitigation factors were included in project design.</p>
City of Dennison	Power transfer switch installed at our well house in case of power outages
City of Dundas	no changes made
City of Faribault	In the last five years we have installed a new outdoor warning siren and mitigated our waste water treatment plant from its flooding issues.
City of Lonsdale	We have implemented a Citizens Alert Program. Over the past 10 years, the city has also identified and addressed flooding issues by increasing the storm sewer capacity during street construction projects.

City of Morristown	Our last two street projects have taken into consideration the large rain events we have had, and increased the size of our storm pipe accordingly.
City of Nerstrand	No changes made
City of Northfield	<p>The City of Northfield adopted a climate action plan in 2019. There are a variety of initiatives in the plan that assist in reducing the city’s vulnerability against severe weather.</p> <p>The city also completed a citywide flood study along with a specific downtown flood study. The city has begun making improvements to reduce flood impacted areas from the study.</p>
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	<p><i>Please include the name of your agency/organization with your comment.</i></p> <p>MnDOT District 6: Yes, in the past 5 years we have:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Repaired via lining culverts and storm sewer pipes that were in very poor condition such that a large precipitation event could cause a sinkhole under the road or shoulder. 2) Added armoring to roadway inslopes in areas prone to overtopping/erosion where we did not have the project funding to upsize the culvert capacity. 3) Added riprap to waterways to help increase the resilience along the roadways and around bridge piers. 4) This Summer (2025) we are going to be stabilizing a very steep inslope with geocells that was damaged in the 2007 Extreme Storm and the repairs made under emergency conditions are now starting to reach the end of their service life. 5) On the design side for new or replaced assets, we have modified the Hydraulic Design Process to add a Check Storm Analysis. This looks at “what if” impacts from an precipitation event larger than the design storm (i.e. 1 annual exceedance probability up [50yr goes to 100yr] or a 15% increase or looking at confidence intervals in Atlas 14/StreamStats)

#4 – INCREASE IN VULNERABILITY	
In the last 5 years, has your jurisdiction experienced an increase in new development? Has this new development created new vulnerabilities to natural hazards in your community? Please describe.	
Rice County	Highway: Rural residential development increases stormwater runoff.
City of Dennison	We have had no new development.
City of Dundas	We have had development over the past five years, but with thoughtful planning around stormwater management. We believe any vulnerability has been mitigated to a certain extent.

City of Faribault	We have seen an uptick in apartment buildings which place more people in a smaller area so tornadoes and other localized emergencies, i.e. fires, power outages, can have larger effect on more people.
City of Lonsdale	We have had an increase in slab-on-grade homes. Over the last 5 years +/- 100 homes have been built increasing impervious ground cover. The city is In discussion with 2 developments consisting of +/-150 lots.
City of Morristown	We have had no new development.
City of Nerstrand	We have had no new development.
City of Northfield	The City has seen growth over the last five years, but with our City regulation related to stormwater management, requiring private utilities to be buried, and more compact dense neighborhood and/or commercial, we believe have had growth anticipated future climate vulnerabilities.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6: Recently, there has been an increase in new development, some of it upstream of the roadway. If the proper design and permits from MPCA Construction Stormwater Permit and MnDOT are obtained, then there is less risk of increasing vulnerability. However, if the development does not address increased impervious surfaces, the extra runoff can increase vulnerability to our infrastructure.

#5 - PUBLIC OUTREACH	
How does your jurisdiction share information with community members about severe weather events and personal preparedness? If this is not something that is currently done, how could it be done in the future?	
Rice County	<p>Rice County Emergency Management - RCEM helps promote and participates in the MN Homeland Security & Emergency Management’s “Severe Weather Awareness Week” held in April of each year. This program is held in conjunction with the National Weather Service and provides education and awareness to residents on the dangers of severe weather and how to be prepared for storms before they hit. A statewide tornado drill is also conducted twice on Thursday during Severe Weather Awareness Week, which Rice County also promotes and participates in. Rice County also posts information on social media sites and invites local media to share information.</p> <p>RCPH - Community outreach related to emergency preparedness, safety kits, Facebook posting, annually extreme heat press release. All RCPH Home Care clients have an individualized emergency preparedness plan. Currently implementing emergency preparedness for ages 65 years, low-income curriculum. Quarterly MN Responds newsletter. September is national emergency preparedness month-lots of outreach with information on severe weather.</p>
City of Dennison	We post information on our community bulletin board outside of City Hall, the Post Office and city website. Information is also put on Facebook.
City of Dundas	Citizens Alert program, Social Media, City’s website page.

City of Faribault	Social media, Everbridge notifications. We have held personal preparedness trainings for the public along with individualized trainings for schools and businesses.
City of Lonsdale	We would use Social Media (Facebook, City Webpage) and utilize the Everbridge system and the City’s mass notification system.
City of Morristown	We currently use our city website and Facebook.
City of Nerstrand	We utilize our city and fire department Facebook pages.
City of Northfield	The city utilizes our website and local media outlets to discuss severe weather along with some in school education for students.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6 shares information regarding severe weather threats via its social media channels on X (https://x.com/mndotsoutheast) and a MnDOT Facebook group for southeast Minnesota (https://www.facebook.com/groups/MnDOTsoutheast). The decision is based on geography and its effect on traffic. Some personal preparedness messages may be shared from other trusted/verified providers. Additionally, MnDOT District has an email alert service that people can sign up for. These alerts are emailed or texted to people who choose to sign up. It covers winter driving alerts, emergency events that affect traffic for extended periods of time in all seasons. The link can be found at https://www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/

#6 - EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS	
Does your jurisdiction encourage residents to sign up for the county’s emergency notification system and/or a local emergency alert system? If yes, how? If this not something that is currently done, how could it be done in the future?	
Rice County	Yes, Rice County encourages residents to sign up by promoting it on social media, radio, and outreach events. Icon is on the Rice County website that leads to the sign-up page.
City of Dennison	No, our city does not do this currently, but we could put a link in our city website. Currently we rely on social media and radio for emergency notifications.
City of Dundas	Yes, we promote it on the City website
City of Faribault	Yes, we utilize social media, radio and during training and other outreach events.
City of Lonsdale	Yes, there is a link to sign up on the City’s PD webpage.
City of Morristown	We can use our city website “Community” page to provide a link to the county website to sign up.
City of Nerstrand	Yes, we promote it on social media
City of Northfield	Yes, we promote it on our City Website and social media (Facebook, Instagram)
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#7 - BUILDING CODES	
Has your jurisdiction adopted the Minnesota State Building Code? Please clearly answer yes or no and provide supporting detail. IF YES, please describe how it is enforced. IF NO,	

please describe if there are other building codes or permitting processes in place to reduce the risk to future development.	
Rice County	Yes. Enforced by Rice County Environmental Services Planning and Zoning – Building Division. The Building Division administers the Minnesota State Building Code and ensures that all construction in unincorporated areas of the county comply with building regulations. It performs field inspections of residential and commercial structures, including fireplaces, footings, foundations, heating, plumbing and structural components.
City of Dennison	Yes. Building inspection and code is contracted through Goodhue County.
City of Dundas	Yes, building codes are enforced through the Building Official and Building Inspector. the Fire Code is enforced by the Fire Chief.
City of Faribault	Yes, we have a Codes Division within the Fire Department that consists of a Building Official, Building Inspector and two Property Maintenance Inspectors. We also do fire inspections (complaint based or requested). Our Planning and Zoning dept is in charge of enforcing our zoning ordinances that have been in place for many years.
City of Lonsdale	Yes, we have a planning and zoning committee. Building codes are enforced through the Building Inspector.
City of Morristown	No, the city does not adopt and enforce the MN State Building Code. We have Planning and Zoning Ordinances that we do enforce.
City of Nerstrand	Yes. Building inspection and code is contracted through Goodhue County.
City of Northfield	Yes, our city building inspections dept. enforces building codes.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#8 - OTHER PLANS AND POLICIES	
What other plans or policies does your jurisdiction have in place to help mitigate against the impacts of flooding and other natural hazards to future development? Please describe.	
Rice County	<p>Rice County has the following plans and policies in place that help to integrate hazard mitigation:</p> <p>RCEM regularly updates the county EOP, and is available to assist local communities with emergency planning.</p> <p>Comprehensive Plan 2040 – Adopted Oct 12, 2021</p> <p>Rice County Highway Department 2024-2033 Plan</p> <p>Rice County Local Water Management Plan (2014-2019) – under Rice County Environmental Services</p> <p>Cannon River 1W1P</p> <p>Rice County NFIP Entry Date: 02/04/1981.</p> <p>Rice County Flood Plain Management Ordinance Chapter 525.</p> <p>Shoreland Ordinance - Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 516</p>

City of Dennison	We will be working on updating our Comprehensive Plan. Last time it was updated was in 1998.
City of Dundas	Dundas has a Comprehensive Plan and also has other regulations in place regarding flooding.
City of Faribault	<p>The City Emergency Manager is in charge of updating our City Multi-Hazard Plan. City EM also meets annually with the 4 mobile home park managers and the school district to ensure that our plan is still current. We have pre-plans of many of our buildings in the city that are available via I-Pad for emergency response.</p> <p>We just updated our Comprehensive Plan for the City and have a well-head protection plan in place. We also have a robust storm sewer maintenance and protection plan.</p>
City of Lonsdale	The city has a comprehensive plan and utilizes other stakeholders to assist with future growth. The City also has regulations in place to address flooding. The city is not located in a flood plain. Storm sewer/ponding needs to account for discharge less than or equal to pre-development
City of Morristown	Our city code enforces floodplain requirements.
City of Nerstrand	City has reestablished its zoning commission and is discussing a comprehensive planning process.
City of Northfield	The PD along with other city stakeholders have input on the EOP. It was updated in the past two years by the Northfield DC of Police. The city has floodplain overlay district along with storm water regulations requiring building to elevated above flood elevations
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6: There are several goals and plans focused on improving resilience and we have also worked to advance research to determine ways to find and rank vulnerable assets. Lots more detail available if you would like specific information on any one area.

#9 - ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	
What departmental staff or elected officials in your jurisdictional help to accomplish hazard mitigation in your community? Please describe.	
Rice County	Rice County has a full time EM Director, Environmental Services Dept, Sheriff's Office, Highway Dept. Engineer that all work together on related planning. Rice County Public Health also has a full-time public health emergency preparedness coordinator.
City of Dennison	The Mayor and City Clerk work on mitigation planning.
City of Dundas	City Administrator, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Public Works Director, City Engineer
City of Faribault	Our Fire Chief is also our City Emergency Manager and our Police Chief is the Deputy City EM. We have a City Engineer, Public Works Director who oversees much of the city's infrastructure.
City of Lonsdale	City Administrator, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Public Works Director, City Engineer.
City of Morristown	Fire Chief, Mayor, and City Administrator who work together on hazard mitigation.

City of Nerstrand	We have a Fire Chief, Mayor, Public Works, and City Clerk who work together on mitigation planning.
City of Northfield	We have a part time City of Northfield Emergency Management Director
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#10 – PARTNERSHIPS	
Are there any agencies, organizations, or businesses that your jurisdiction has worked with to address mitigation efforts in your community? Please describe.	
Rice County	Rice County has a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to assist with emergency response. We have worked with MNDOT, HSEM, and Rice SWCD on mitigation efforts in the past. RCPH-Multiple county departments have assisted in past flooding events, as well as community volunteers and the American Red Cross.
City of Dennison	We are part of the Minnesota Rural Water Association but have not asked for any assistance when it comes to mitigation efforts, recently.
City of Dundas	We work with the MN DNR, MPCA, MN DOT, MNWARN and Rice County
City of Faribault	We have a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to assist with different aspects of emergency response. We have and do work with the Rice SWCD, MN DNR, MNDOT, MnWARN, MPCA, HSEM, MN National Guard Rice County and the various schools in our community. We work closely with the Rice County EM and share resources such as radios and the outdoor warning sirens in Rice County. We work with the Growing Up Healthy group to assist low-income households in various ways.
City of Lonsdale	We work with the MN DNR, MPCA, MNDOT, MNWARN, Lonsdale SkyWarn and the different departments in Rice County.
City of Morristown	We have worked with Rice SWCD, to do a study of the Cannon River and the flooding issues.
City of Nerstrand	We work with Goodhue and Rice County departments to address mitigation
City of Northfield	The city has worked with the Rotary Club to assist with some items in the Climate Action Plan. The city works with Clean River Partners to assist with some education related to stormwater.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6: We have worked with Watershed Districts and the Army Corps of Engineers, but mostly as a permittee looking to obtain permits. We have also had an initial meeting with MnDNR, MPCA, Corps, BWSR, UofM (SAFL and Climate Adaptation Partnership).

#11 - PROGRAMS IN PLACE	
What sort of programs does your jurisdiction participate in to help raise awareness and reduce risk from natural hazards in your community?	
Rice County	Rice County Emergency Management participates annually with the NWS's annual Winter/Spring Weather Awareness Week. RCEM posts information on severe weather to County Facebook Pages and talking on local radio programs during those weeks to inform the public. We also work closely with our local SKYWARN groups in their public information campaigns. Development of countywide preparedness group with EM.

	RCPH works with community groups (Growing Up Healthy, HCI) to bring awareness. Participation in the school preparedness group. PH grant programs in place to help with PHEP. Efforts for our Home Care and Long Term Care clients to promote EP.
City of Dennison	We work with Rice County Emergency Management to notify citizens about severe weather and awareness. Sogn Valley SkyWarn is also valuable in notifying citizens of severe weather, too.
City of Dundas	We work with Rice County Emergency Management on Winter/Spring Weather Awareness. We post relevant items on the city website.
City of Faribault	We are a designated Weather Ready Community through the National Weather Service. We work closely with our schools on fire, evacuation, and severe weather drills. We do outreach and work with the Growing Up Healthy group on water line wrapping with heat tape, severe weather awareness and fire prevention.
City of Lonsdale	We work closely with Sky Warn and Rice County Emergency Management and use social media on severe weather alerts and awareness.
City of Morristown	Morristown Skywarn
City of Nerstrand	Our city works with the County EM to share information to our community.
City of Northfield	We work with Rice County Emergency Management with the spring Severe Weather awareness week.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#12 - FUNDING & OTHER RESOURCES	
What funding sources are available to help your jurisdiction to accomplish implementation of mitigation activities? Please describe. Include internal local government funding as well as external funding sources (grant or loan sources from local, state, or federal agencies).	
Rice County	FEMA Mitigation funds have been a source of funding, along with MN DNR grants and private sector funding opportunities. RCPH-Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grants to cover Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and outreach materials.
City of Dennison	The city of Dennison is currently seeking State and Federal Grant funds to improve our city infrastructure.
City of Dundas	Projects are generally funded from the general fund.
City of Faribault	We have dollars for training and education in our general fund. The fire department also searches out grants to help educate community members. Our Community Development department receives grants to educate citizens about sustainability and alternative energies.
City of Lonsdale	Most of the funding comes from our general fund. We have received grants through the MN Department of Public Safety and CenterPoint Energy to assist with public safety communication needs.
City of Morristown	FEMA Mitigation funds
City of Nerstrand	City is looking for grant funding, but most projects are funded from general fund.

City of Northfield	The city is always looking for grant programs, such programs through the Federal Government and State Government. Grant programs recently utilized include FEMA Hazard Mitigation grants (BRIC and FMA).
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6: We use State and Federal Transportation Funds and Grants. We also utilize FEMA and FHWA disaster assistance funds, if eligible and needed.

#13 - LOCAL MITIGATION PROJECTS	
Please describe what mitigation actions would help to reduce risk to your community from future natural hazard events. Please include mitigation activities that address local vulnerabilities that were identified in Question #2. Please be as specific as possible in your responses. The mitigation actions you identify will be used to develop your local mitigation action charts. If you have any mitigation projects you are aware that your jurisdiction will be seeking to apply for FEMA HMA Grant Program funding for, please make note of that.	
Rice County	<p>Rice County Public Health - Continue public education related to Citizens Alert, and work to expand messages to be delivered in other languages (English/Spanish/Somali) in text and verbal messages. Assess vulnerability of tornado and high wind events to large public events. Search for ways to partner with mobile home rehab efforts in the county to incorporate weather preparedness. We could incorporate emergency preparedness education with Healthy Homes assessments.</p> <p>Rice County Highway Dept - Pave road shoulders as part of roadway improvements; including both rehabilitation and reconstruction projects.</p>
City of Dennison	Windstorms/Tornados - Designate City Hall as a storm shelter. Secure funding for a stand-alone generator for both City Hall and the Well House.
City of Dundas	<p>Windstorm/Winter Storms- Conduct tree management around power lines with the goal of having power lines underground.</p> <p>Flooding- Continue to upgrade the city’s storm sewer capacity during reconstruction projects.</p>
City of Faribault	<p>Dam Failure - Mitigation of both dams near the Woolen Mills is a high priority. The June floods exposed the need to act on the structures. They are old and do not meet known standards for dams. We are actively researching mitigation projects. Updating, upgrading or even removal and replacement with another type of structure are all options being seriously looked at.</p> <p>Drought – Establish and enforce watering use restrictions when in periods of severe drought.</p> <p>Extreme Heat- Educate people about extreme heat and ensure that our City facilities are prepared to serve and cooling shelters if needed.</p> <p>Extreme Cold – Encourage residents to be prepared for periods of extreme cold and potential power outages. Use our city website to notify residents to avoid freezing pipes during sub-zero weather. Work with the local</p>

	<p>nursing home to be prepared with emergency plans for extended power outages. Work with the county and partner agencies to establish a warming center facility and program for those who are homeless and exposed to extreme cold.</p> <p>Severe Winter / Summer Storms – Post information on the city’s website and educate citizens on signing up for the county’s emergency notification system. Participate in the National Weather Service’s – Severe Weather Awareness Weeks.</p> <p>Meet annually with our MN National Guard partners as their facility is our mass care shelter.</p> <p>Flooding – Implement new storm sewer upgrades as construction projects. Work with the city and county engineer on local flood reduction measures. Enforce the city’s sump pump ordinance to minimize impacts to the city’s stormwater system.</p> <p>Windstorms/Tornadoes - Continue to add outdoor warning sirens as the city grows. Work with the local mobile home managers to ensure that their residents know the sheltering plan for their park.</p>
City of Lonsdale	<p>Tornado- Assess and address the need for storm shelters accessible to vulnerable areas.</p> <p>Windstorm/Winter Storms- Conduct tree management around power lines with the goal of having power lines underground.</p> <p>Flooding- Continue to upgrade the city’s storm sewer capacity during reconstruction projects.</p>
City of Morristown	<p>Work with the local mobile home park owner to construct a storm shelter or tornado safe room. Work with Xcel to move power underground if possible. Improve substation to lessen power outages.</p>
City of Nerstrand	<p>Windstorms - Consider working with local power companies to move power underground if possible.</p> <p>Extreme Cold/Heat - Work to ensure staff is at County Designated shelter (City Hall) during these events.</p> <p>Wildfire - Consider grant funding available to support the fire department with wildfire equipment.</p>
City of Northfield	<p>Flooding - The City has completed a City-Wide Flood Study and a specific downtown flood study that the city will be seeking grants for implementation.</p> <p>Wind/Tornados - Work with power company to move power underground if possible.</p>

	Assess and address our local forestry efforts, specifically how the Emerald Ash Borer/other pest infestation may impact our urban forest.
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#14 - GAPS OR DEFICIENCIES	
Please describe any specific gaps or deficiencies that are a barrier to implementing local mitigation measures.	
Rice County	RCPH - We need to address gaps in language translation of emergency preparedness alerts.
City of Dennison	Funding availability.
City of Dundas	Funding availability
City of Faribault	Most mitigation efforts require funding which is the biggest hurdle.
City of Lonsdale	Funding
City of Morristown	The city needs significant funding assistance to buy out residential properties that have experienced repetitive loss from flooding. We are a small city with limited financial and staff resources to address local mitigation projects.
City of Nerstrand	Funding availability due to being a small rural community.
City of Northfield	Funding challenges for the local community
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	

#15 - SURVEY PARTICIPANTS	
Please list the names & titles of all persons that contributed information to this survey. Participant information is important to ensure good jurisdictional participation, and each person's time will count towards the 25% in-kind match requirement for the HMP update.	
Rice County	Joseph Johnson, Director of Emergency Management Martha Sykes, PH Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Angie Nagel, Supervisor - PH Disease Prevention / Emergency Preparedness Deb Purfeerst, Public Health Director
City of Dennison	Jeffrey Flaten, Mayor
City of Dundas	Jenelle Teppen, City Administrator
City of Faribault	Dustin Dienst, Fire Chief / Emergency Manager
City of Lonsdale	Jason Schmitz, Police Chief Joseph Pumper, Fire Chief Joel Erickson, City Administrator Joe Dornfeld, Public Works Director
City of Morristown	Ellen Judd, City Administrator
City of Nerstrand	Joe Johnson, Fire Chief
City of Northfield	P.T. Haider, DC of Police David Bennett, Public Works Director/City Engineer
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS	MnDOT District 6, Chad Hanson, Emergency Management Coordinator

Appendix D – Plans & Programs in Place

Rice County

HMP Plans & Programs in Place Form

EMERGENCY PLANNING CAPABILITIES	Yes/No	Comments
Emergency Notification System (please specify, i.e., CodeRED, Smart911, Everbridge, etc)	Yes	IPAWS, Everbridge
Outdoor Warning Sirens (please note locations and # per jurisdiction)	Yes	Dundas – 2 Faribault – 9 Lonsdale – 3 Morristown – 1 Nerstrand – 1 Northfield – 11 Shieldsville Twp – 2 Warsaw Twp – 2 Wheatland Twp – 1
Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)	Yes	EOP is updated annually
Mass Care Sheltering Plan / List of Shelter Facilities	Yes	Addressed in EOP and in coordination with local jurisdictions
Tornado Safe Rooms / Storm Shelters (please list any existing specific locations)	No	Addressed in coordination with schools & local jurisdictions with local vulnerabilities
NWS Weather Ready Nation / StormReady Certification	No	
Coordination with Schools	Yes	Tornado Drills, other trainings
Coordination with Neighboring Jurisdictions	Yes	Annual regional planning and training; statewide AMEM conference
Coordination with Local and Regional Agencies involved in mitigation	Yes	SWCD, MN DNR, MnDOT, Rural and Municipal Electric Cooperatives, Watershed Districts
Coordination with organizations or agencies addressing disaster related issues and vulnerable populations, emergency preparedness, access and functional needs populations (List as applicable)	Yes	Public Health, American Red Cross, Salvation Army
Past storm hazard data and information	Yes	Damage information is kept on file from past storm events and disaster declarations

<i>Other (please describe)</i>	Yes	Public Health has preparedness plans in place
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PLANNING & REGULATORY CAPABILITIES	Yes/No	Comments
Comprehensive/Land Use Plan	Yes	Comprehensive Plan 2040 – Adopted Oct 12, 2021
Capital Improvements Plan	Yes	Included in overall County Budget
Economic Development Plan	Yes	Included in Comprehensive Plan 2040 – Adopted Oct 12, 2021
Climate Adaptation Plan	Yes	Included in Comprehensive Plan 2040 – Adopted Oct 12, 2021
Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)	Yes	Located in each Department
Transportation Plan	Yes	Rice County Highway Department 2024-2033 Plan
Stormwater Management Plan / Drainage Plan	Yes	Rice County Highway Department – Ditch Manager
Burning Permits/Restrictions (i.e., identify if issued through Sheriff's Office or MN DNR)	Yes	Issued through MNDNR
Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan	Yes	Rice County Local Water Management Plan (2014-2019) – under Rice County Environmental Services
Watershed Plan (One Watershed, One Plan)	Yes	Cannon River 1W1P
Wellhead Protection Plan	Yes	Municipal level plans are done in coordination with MDH
Forest Management Plan	Yes	Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 506.10
Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)	No	
Participation in MN DNR Firewise Program	No	
Database of Dry Hydrants/Well Access	No	
<i>Other (please describe)</i>		

LOCAL POLICY / PROGRAM CAPABILITIES	Yes/No	Comments
Land Use, Planning, & Zoning Ordinance	Yes	Rice County Zoning Ordinances
Subdivision Ordinance	Yes	Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 523
MN State Building Code Enforcement	Yes	Rice County Environmental Services Planning and Zoning
Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)	Yes	Rice County NFIP Entry Date: 02/04/1981
Adoption of Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps	Yes	Map Effective Dates 4/3/2012 & 4/6/2022
Floodplain Ordinance	Yes	Rice County Flood Plain Management Ordinance Chapter 525
Shoreland Ordinance	Yes	Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 516
Minnesota Buffer Law / Soil Erosion Ordinance	Yes	Managed by Rice SWCD
Home Buyouts for flood or erosion mitigation	Yes	Managed by cities or Rice County Zoning Administrator
Other natural hazard specific ordinances (i.e., stormwater, steep slope, wildfire)	Yes	Rice County Zoning Ordinance Chapter 506
Maintenance programs to reduce risk	Yes	Highway Dept. ROW maintenance and drainage systems
<i>Other (please describe)</i>		

ADMINISTRATIVE/TECHNICAL CAPABILITIES	Yes/No	Comments
Emergency Management Director	Yes	Rice County Sheriff's Office EMD
Sheriff/Police Department	Yes	Goodhue County Sheriff
Floodplain Management Administrator	Yes	Rice County Environmental Services – Planning and Zoning
Chief Building Official	Yes	Rice County Environmental Services – Building Division
Highway Engineer	Yes	Rice County Highway Department
Mapping Specialist (GIS)	Yes	Rice County Assessor's Office

Public Health Coordinator/Department	Yes	Rice County Public Health
Planning Commission	Yes	Rice County Planning Commission & Board of Adjustment
Coordination with Soil and Water Conservation District	Yes	Rice SWCD
Coordination with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	Yes	Forestry, Hydrologist, Parks
Mitigation Planning Committee	Yes	2025 HMP Update Planning Team of Stakeholders
Mutual Aid Agreements in place	Yes	Regional; MAA's also existing between local fire departments
<i>Other (please describe)</i>		

EDUCATION & OUTREACH CAPABILITIES	Yes/No	Comments
SKYWARN Program Training with NWS (annual training)	Yes	Held in coordination with the NWS
National Weather Service – Severe Weather Awareness Weeks	Yes	Emergency Management participates in coordination with HSEM and NWS each November and April
Promotion of NOAA Weather Radios	Yes	During NWS Severe Weather Weeks and Ongoing
<i>Other (please describe)</i>		

Appendix E – Past Mitigation Action Review Status Report

Rice County

Past Mitigation Action Review Status Report

Following is a report on the status of mitigation actions related to natural hazards included in the Rice County **2019** Hazard Mitigation Plan. This report covers the mitigation actions that were listed for implementation by Rice County and by city jurisdictions or partner agencies, as applicable. The status of mitigation actions is defined as the following:

Completed – The action was a defined activity or project completed since the last plan update.

Ongoing – The action is continually being implemented and moving forward. Ongoing mitigation actions will be reviewed and revised as necessary for inclusion in the plan update.

Deleted – The action is deemed as not relevant and is not considered for inclusion in the plan update.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
1	All-Hazards	Continue to ensure that all Rice County residents are aware of and sign-up for the County’s Everbridge Emergency Notification System.	Ongoing	<p>This is an on-going effort of Rice County Emergency Management. A link for the Rice County Everbridge Citizen Alert System for community sign up is provided on the County website, and reminders are also posted using the Sheriff’s Office Facebook Page.</p> <p>All municipalities within the County are encouraged to promote sign up for the Everbridge system using their means of public outreach (websites, social media, local media).</p>
2	All-Hazards	Ensure the ability to reach all residents of the County with emergency notifications, including non-English speaking residents and those with special needs (i.e. hearing impaired).	Ongoing	<p>Rice County is IPAWS capable, allowing the County to do targeted and County-wide emergency notifications to reach both residents and visitors.</p> <p>Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) provides MN ECHO services for emergency messaging over cable, broadcast television and social media in 3 alternative languages (Spanish, Somali, and Hmong).</p>

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
3	All-Hazards	Continue to ensure that local elected officials, city emergency managers, and other key staff receive emergency preparedness education & training to understand principles of the Incident Command System (ICS) and their roles and responsibilities during an emergency.	Ongoing	This is a standing element of the Rice County Emergency Management Program. Each year Rice County Emergency Management works to offer training to County and city elected officials and other key staff on how ICS will be used in a response to any incident. Local jurisdictions and key response partners are also engaged in annual exercises (i.e., tabletop, functional, and full-scale).
4	All-Hazards	Continue to develop/update County/City and education institution's Emergency Operation Plans to ensure that they adequately detail the needed steps of personnel to respond to all-hazards.	Ongoing	Rice County maintains an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), which is designed as a guide for emergency operations. It is intended to assist key county/city officials and emergency organizations to carry out their responsibilities for the protection of life and property under a wide range of emergency conditions. The Rice County EOP is updated on an annual basis to address new HSEM MNWALK requirements. Schools, colleges, and municipal governments with Rice County may also work to annually update jurisdictional or facility emergency response plans.
5	All-Hazards	Ensure that sheltering plans and designated facilities are established as locations for mass care sheltering in the event that people are displaced due to disaster events.	Ongoing	Mass Care planning is part of the Rice County EOP. Rice County Emergency Management will continue to work with local jurisdictions and the American Red Cross to identify and establish MOU's with new facilities capable of serving as mass care shelters throughout the year.
6	All-Hazards	Utilize GIS technology and database management to identify vulnerable populations within the community.	Ongoing	RC Emergency Management will work with RC PH/SS and GIS dept. to list/map known locations of facilities that house special needs populations such as long-term care facilities, hospitals, and day care facilities.
7	All-Hazards	Include planning for agricultural-related emergency response issues.	Ongoing	This is an on-going part of the Rice County EOP development.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
8	All-Hazards	Update County/City Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances to include mitigation considerations that help to reduce risk from natural hazards. Utilize data of past hazard events and future climate projections to help inform updates.	Ongoing	RC Emergency Management will encourage the County and local cities to update Comp Plans to include considerations for mitigation in land use planning in order to reduce future risk to due to natural hazards (i.e., flooding).
9	All-Hazards	Continue to promote education & awareness on all-hazards and emergency preparedness for schools, individuals, families, and businesses. Also provide post-disaster education & outreach to residents.	Ongoing	This is an on-going effort of Rice County Emergency Management & Rice County Public Health. Information is distributed to the public via the Sheriff's Office Facebook page. Additional information is provided during the NWS severe weather awareness weeks in spring and winter. Local jurisdictions, colleges, and public schools are encouraged to share information through their own existing channels (i.e., websites, social media, and local media). Following a disaster RC Emergency Management & RC Public Health work with affected communities to provide them with the necessary information about safety measures that should be taken.
10	All-Hazards	Continue to adopt and enforce updates from the International Building Code (IBC) in local-level building code regulations.	Ongoing	The RC Environmental Services/Building Division administers the State Building Code and ensures that all construction in the unincorporated areas of the county comply with proper building regulations. Adoption and enforcement of building codes by the County and individual cities helps to ensure the design and construction of structures meet minimum standards for public safety.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
11	All-Hazards	Continue to encourage/provide support to facilities that care for vulnerable populations to develop emergency plans for evacuation, sheltering, or other protection in the event of threat or hazard events as per Federal and State requirements.	Ongoing	Facilities that care for special needs populations (i.e., nursing homes, hospitals, medical clinics, and hospice facilities) are required by federal law (<i>CMS – Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services</i>) to meet certain requirements for emergency planning, equipment (generators), and exercises. Family daycare facilities and other types of group homes are also responsible to develop emergency plans under separate State Statute requirements. (<i>MN State Statute 245A.51 Subdivision 3 and 245A.04 Subdivision 15</i>).
12	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Identify and evaluate potential measures for upgrades/retrofits to County/City critical infrastructure, new, or existing buildings in order to reduce the risk of damage from future hazard events.	Ongoing	The RC Parks & Facilities Dept. plans, manages, and conducts the physical operation, maintenance, and capital renewal of RC buildings, parks, and other facilities. New County or city facilities will be reviewed when they are permitted.
13	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Continue to promote / participate in the National Weather Service’s annual Winter Weather Awareness Week in the fall and Severe Weather Awareness Week in the spring to improve local residents’ understanding of storm hazards and personal readiness measures.	Ongoing	This is an on-going effort of Rice County Emergency Management. Public outreach is conducted using the Sheriff’s Office FB page and local media to educate residents on the dangers of severe winter and summer storms and highlight the importance of preparing for severe weather before it strikes. Local cities are encouraged to participate and share this information through their own local channels such as Facebook and city websites.
14	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Continue to promote the use of NOAA weather radios by residents, schools, businesses, and facilities that house special needs and vulnerable populations.	Ongoing	Rice County Emergency Management and local city/townships promote the use of NOAA weather radios by critical facilities and the public to receive information broadcast from the National Weather Service. NOAA weather radios are recommended as an important way to receive emergency weather alerts from the NWS.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
15	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Identify critical facilities or infrastructure that do not have generator back-up power in the event of a major power outage resulting from severe winter or summer storms.	Ongoing	<p>Rice County's current priorities for generator back-up power include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portable or fixed generators for shelter facilities in order to provide for heat/cooling and electricity in the event of a disaster. • RC Highway Department – Faribault Shop, Rice County Courthouse Building <p>Local cities are responsible to identify their respective critical facilities that should have back up power and seek funding for purchase of needed equipment.</p>
16	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Purchase and install generator hook-ups and encourage local generator purchases for identified critical facilities that should have back-up power.	Ongoing	Rice County, local city governments, and schools will evaluate feasibility to purchase and install generators for key facilities, and will do so as funding allows.
17	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Work with rural and municipal electrical cooperatives/power companies to reduce overhead exposure of powerlines that are vulnerable to damage from severe winter/summer storms (i.e., high winds, ice, and heavy snow). Replace overhead power lines with underground lines in areas with high-risk exposure (i.e. high tree concentration areas).	Ongoing	<p>Rice County and all cities will work as needed with their appropriate utility providers as needed to evaluate areas of concern. Service providers for Rice County include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MVEC – Minnesota Valley Electrical Cooperative out of Jordan, MN • Steele/Waseca Cooperative Electrical – Owatonna, MN • Xcel Energy • Goodhue County Coop Electric Assn • Dakota Electric Assn <p>Areas of concern will be evaluated to see where putting lines underground may be feasible and make sense</p>
18	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Regularly inspect and trim trees near power lines to reduce power outages due to falling tree limbs during storms.	Ongoing	Tree management in the right-of-way of County/City roads is addressed by the respective utility companies in their service area as well as RC Highway Dept./City Public Works. Townships within Rice County also complete tree management within their road areas.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
19	Severe Winter Weather	Conduct outreach to provide education & awareness to residents for severe-winter weather preparedness, including for individuals, families, and the elderly.	Ongoing	This is an on-going effort of Rice County Emergency Management. During periods of winter storms or extreme cold, reminders are put out on preparedness measures such as having home generators, inspecting furnaces and installing CO2 detectors, protecting septic systems, and having emergency travel kits in vehicles. Those who depend on medication are also encouraged to keep a supply on hand.
20	Severe Winter Weather	Continue to provide for public safety on roads through snow removal, salting and sanding to minimize the impacts of snow/ice accumulation on roadways.	Ongoing	Rice County, Townships and Cities complete the snow removal and disperse sand/salt as needed on all, county, city and township roads. MNDOT will remove the snow from State Highways as well as disperse salt/sand as needed.
21	Severe Summer Storms	Conduct outreach to provide education & awareness to residents for severe spring & summer storms preparedness, including for individuals, families, and the elderly.	Ongoing	During periods of the year with extreme spring & summer storms, RC Emergency Management promotes preparedness measures such as having home generators, understanding tornado warnings vs. watches, what to do when warning sirens go off, and having extra food and water in stock. Those who depend on medication are also encouraged to keep a supply on hand. Homeowners without basements are provided with safety tips on how to shelter in-place within the home. The County also participates in the Statewide Tornado Drill in April each year. Opportunities for additional community outreach include providing information at community events such as "Nite To Unite" or the County Fair

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
22	Severe Summer Storms	Encourage the retrofitting of existing homes, buildings, schools, or public park facilities with building materials that help to reduce the impact of severe storm events that can cause damage such as high winds, thunderstorms, lightning, and hail storms.	Ongoing	Rice County Emergency Management will seek to make information available on more resilient building materials that can sustain severe storms, such as during Severe Weather Awareness Week. Rice County Parks & Facilities Services and the RC Environmental Services will evaluate respective county facilities for potential retrofit projects that will help to minimize future risk to county buildings or recreational facilities.
23	Severe Summer Storms	Provide information on the benefits of tie-down straps for mobile homes to help withstand extreme wind or tornado events.	Ongoing	<p>RC Emergency Management will encourage cities with mobile home parks to promote homeowner information on installation of tie down straps. RC Emergency Management may utilize news releases or post information on the Sheriff's Office FB page as well.</p> <p>Manufactured homes are more easily flipped or damaged during windstorms than site-built homes and require tie-downs to remain stable. Manufactured homes are elevated and vulnerable to the forces of wind uplift if they are not equipped with skirting and tie downs.</p>
24	Severe Summer Storms	Work to ensure Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Evacuation Plan & Storm Shelter Requirements are met in municipalities with manufactured home parks.	Ongoing	<p>Minnesota State Statute (327.205 Shelter Construction Standards) outlines the requirements for MHP's with less than 10 units / more than 10 units for evacuation plans and sheltering facilities for the residents of the park in times of high winds or tornadoes, as well as the responsibility of municipalities with MHPs to assist with/approve of evacuation & shelter plans.</p> <p>RC Emergency Management will encourage municipalities to continue to work with local MPH operators to ensure they are in compliance with the law.</p>

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
25	Severe Summer Storms	Ensure that warning siren policies & procedures are in place, and ensure the functionality of all outdoor warning sirens in the County (testing & equipment upgrades).	Ongoing	<p>Rice County has warning sirens located throughout the county. RC Emergency Management, the County PSAP and each city participate in statewide testing of emergency sirens as well as testing them on the first Wednesday of each month. Rice County also activates a weekly “growl” test on 22 of its sirens.</p> <p>Sirens are activated when a tornado warning is issued or wind speeds are indicated of 70 miles per hour or more for Rice County by the National Weather Service. Rice County Sirens are also activated when a City or County Public Safety Official (Police, Fire) requests activation due to imminent danger to life and/or property.</p> <p>Warning sirens are owned by the city or township where they are located and the maintenance is the responsibility of the local government.</p>
26	Severe Summer Storms	Identify additional areas within the County (i.e., townships, public recreation areas) that should be considered for installation of a new warning siren.	Ongoing	RC Emergency Management will work to advise the Townships and Cities of the need for additional outdoor warning sirens in public recreation areas and rural areas not covered due to their distance from other outdoor warning sirens. New siren systems will be installed as feasible.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
27	Severe Summer Storms	Identify community areas (i.e., parks, campgrounds) and facilities (i.e., schools, government buildings, mobile home parks) that are vulnerable to tornadoes and evaluate for potential construction or retrofit of safe rooms or storm shelters.	Ongoing	<p>RC Emergency Management and RC Parks & Facilities have identified the following areas as priorities for evaluation for safe room construction or retrofit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McCullough Park and Campground [30 spot campground + 1 cabin] • Work with all colleges and public schools to assess need & potential for new construction or retrofit • Rice County Public Schools • Rice County Fairgrounds • Mobile Home Parks <p>Local city Emergency Managers will also work to evaluate areas of need for storm shelters or safe rooms, such as for local campgrounds or mobile home parks.</p>
28	Severe Summer Storms	Implement construction or retrofit projects for safe rooms or storm shelters in identified vulnerable locations.	Ongoing	Any community safe room projects that the County is involved in will be part of the Rice Emergency Management program. FEMA grant funding may be sought to support an eligible safe room project.
29	Severe Summer Storms	Post information in County/City public recreation areas (i.e., parks, trails, and campgrounds) on storm shelter access and/or safety measures to take in the event of severe storms.	Ongoing	Most County & City public parks, campgrounds, and trail areas have informational signage or interpretive areas. Rice County Emergency Management and Rice County Parks & Facilities and cities will work to post information as applicable to these areas on the location of any existing storm shelters or recommended precautions to take in the event of severe weather while using the area. Local municipal campgrounds will also be encouraged to post information as applicable for their facility.
30	Severe Summer Storms	Continue to provide the National Weather Service’s “Skywarn Storm Spotter” training in various parts of the County for first responders and community residents.	Ongoing	Rice County offers SKYWARN training on an annual basis for local fire and law enforcement departments, local Skywarn groups and local residents that wish to be trained as volunteers.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
31	Extreme Temps (Heat/Cold)	Provide outreach & education to vulnerable populations in the community (i.e., senior citizens, young adults) on personal safety measures to take during periods of extreme heat / cold.	Ongoing	This is done as part of the NWS annual spring and winter severe weather awareness weeks. It is also done during actual periods of extreme temperatures. Information on staying safe during periods of extreme heat or cold is relayed to the public through channels such as County/City websites, social media, radio, and local newspapers. All Schools work to educate students on the dangers of extreme heat and cold as well.
32	Extreme Temps (Heat/Cold)	Develop plans to respond to extreme temperatures situations in Rice County.	Ongoing	In the event of a severe heat or cold event that poses risk to public safety, Rice County Emergency Management will work with Rice County Public Health/Social Services to release information to the public about personal safety measures and where to go for a heating/cooling facility for the public, especially at-risk individuals such as senior citizens.
33	Flooding	Educate the public on the dangers associated with flooding and provide timely flood-condition information.	Ongoing	Flood watches, advisories, or warnings are issued by the NWS and additionally conveyed by RC Emergency Management via the Sheriff's Office Facebook page to help get the word out. During the NWS's Severe Weather Awareness Week in April each year, one day is dedicated to floods and flood education. Cities also post flood-hazard information on their city websites or Facebook pages to alert residents to safety concerns during high rain events.
34	Flooding	Continue to enforce local floodplain ordinances and participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.	ongoing	Rice County and all cities (except the City of Nerstrand) participate in the NFIP and have floodplain ordinances in effect. Rice County GIS Dept. maintains the floodplain maps for the County. Bridgewater Township has its own zoning and floodplain regulations.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
35	Flooding	Identify all residential and commercial structures in the floodplain throughout Rice County, and inform homeowners / businesses about participating in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).	Ongoing	New FEMA floodplain maps were established for Rice County 4/3/2012. Rice County Planning & Zoning and local cities will inform homeowners and businesses in mapped floodplain areas about participating in the NFIP if they do not do so already.
36	Flooding	Continue to ensure there are sand bags and other equipment available to respond to emergency flood events within Rice County.	Ongoing	RC Emergency Management maintains a resource list of sandbags and other equipment available.
37	Flooding	Work to reduce the impacts of sedimentation and erosion to the County's drainage systems of streams, creeks, and culverts to mitigate over-the-road flooding.	Ongoing	Rice County Highway Department serves as the Ditch Inspector for Rice County. The ditch inspector reviews ditches to determine what work is needed and coordinates the work with the ditch group and the contractors. Roadside ditch cleaning and stabilization help to mitigate against over-the-road flooding and plugging of culverts with sedimentation and debris. RC Highway Dept. helps to identify problem areas along County maintained roads.
38	Flooding	Ensure that wellhead protection plans are in place to address flooding that may lead to contaminated drinking water.	Ongoing	Rice County and individual municipalities are responsible to develop and update wellhead protection plans. MDH assists public water suppliers with preparing and implementing wellhead protection plans. The Wellhead Protection Plan presents the actions that will be taken to manage potential contamination sources that may present a risk to the quality of a community's drinking water.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
39	Flooding	Identify and prioritize roads or bridges within the County that experience repetitive flooding and plan for mitigation measures to reduce flood-related risks.	Ongoing	<p>The Highway Department updates and formally adopts a 10 -year Transportation Plan that focuses on the needs of County Highway system and how it impacts State and local transportation systems. All highway construction projects that impact major drainage systems are reviewed to address known, or predicted, flooding potentials. Applicable Federal, State and local laws and requirements are met.</p> <p>City public works/highway depts. also maintain an inventory of potential and historical problem areas for flooding and plan for projects based on priority and available funding.</p>
40	Flooding	Construct floodwalls or permanent levees in areas that protect wastewater treatment plants, other municipal utilities, or property at risk to flooding.	Ongoing	<p>The Rice County Environmental Services division administers the Rice County Sewage and Wastewater Treatment Ordinance, which involves reviewing individual and community wastewater treatment system designs, issuing permits for those systems and inspecting the installation of the systems to ensure code requirements are met.</p> <p>Individual municipalities are responsible to identify and mitigate against flooding to critical infrastructure such as pump stations, lift stations, and wastewater treatment plants.</p>
41	Flooding	Develop stormwater management plans and ordinances that require improvement of stormwater management systems, including for areas of new development and installation of infrastructure capable of handling a ten-to-twenty-year rain event.	Ongoing	Rice County, Bridgewater Twsp and local cities all maintain stormwater management plans and work to identify, prioritize, and address highest risk areas.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
42	Flooding	Implement measures to improve flood/stormwater control systems throughout Rice County.	Ongoing	<p>The RC Highway Department, Townships & RC SWCD oversee monitoring and maintenance of storm water control systems within the County, and work with local municipalities on stormwater system improvements.</p> <p>Funding to support stormwater improvement projects may be available through avenues such as the MN DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation Grants, MPCA, and FEMA HMA funding for flood reduction projects.</p>
43	Flooding	Identify residential and/or commercial properties that experience repetitive damage from flooding and work to conduct buy-out for property acquisition & structure demolition or relocation.	Ongoing	<p>Rice County and municipalities will work to identify properties that experience repetitive flooding and work with the property owner to explore buy-out and demolition/relocation of the property.</p> <p>Current priorities for potential buy-outs by Rice County include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes along Hwy. 3 & the Cannon River near CR 29. • City of Faribault: 3rd Ave NE & 14th St NW <p>Properties bought out would be converted to open space to eliminate future flood damages.</p>
44	Flooding	Identify County or municipal buildings or public use facilities affected by flooding and identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce future risk (i.e., relocation, infrastructure to divert water or flood proof, etc.)	Ongoing	As episodes of high rain and flooding events become more common in Rice County, local governments will work to identify mitigation solutions for flooding that affects existing facilities or public use areas.
45	Flooding	Increase floodplain protection through the acquisition and restoration of privately-owned/undeveloped parcels of land in the mapped floodplain for Rice County (i.e., private land owners, ag-land owners, or land held for developers).	Ongoing	Continue to work with Cities & County regarding floodplain protection considerations and acquisition.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
46	Flooding	Educate citizens on changes they can make to their properties to mitigate against flood damage to structures and property (i.e., green infrastructure, landscaping, and drainage applications).	Ongoing	<p>Rice County SWCD offers education and technical assistance to property owners / land users, including an annual tree & shrub sale and on-site technical assistance (i.e., to assess severe soil erosion).</p> <p>The cities of Faribault and Northfield both have an MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) permit from the MPCA which helps each city to address improvements that property owners may make to mitigate against flood damages.</p>
47	Flooding / Erosion	Provide assistance to landowners in the application of practices that help to restore and stabilize areas impacted by wind/water erosion (i.e., wetland restoration, installation of shelter belts, erosion control measures for lake shore and stream bank stabilization).	Ongoing	<p>The Rice County SWCD and offers educational, financial, and technical assistance to land users for management and conservation practices to protect and restore soil & water resources.</p> <p>The Rice County Environmental Services also oversees the development, update, and implementation of the County's water management plan, which includes restoration of wetlands, protection of shorelines and ground water supply along with the Watershed Districts within Rice County.</p> <p>Local cities are encouraged to restore and preserve natural systems in their jurisdictions as applicable to help in localized flood risk reduction.</p>
48	Flooding / Erosion	Identify and implement erosion control measures to protection the Rice County Landfill and Rice County Parks that the Cannon River runs through.	Ongoing	Rice County Parks & Facilities and Rice County Environmental Health will work in coordination with Rice County SWCD to identify and implement feasible erosion control measures. Stabilization of the ravine near the landfill is a priority

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
49	Flooding / Erosion	Work with agricultural land owners to encourage/incentivize farmland best practices such as no-till and strip-till to increase infiltration and reduce runoff, erosion of sediment, and flooding.	Ongoing	Rice County SWCD offers education, technical and financial assistance to landowners on practices to reduce erosion.
50	Erosion / Landslides	Improve the stabilization of hillsides or banks to reduce impacts to roads, natural resources, and recreation areas from erosion and slope failure.	Ongoing	<p>The Rice County SWCD, RC Highway Dept., and RC Ditch Manager work together to identify and address problem areas for erosion control and slope stabilization along the County Road system, and county ditch system.</p> <p>Identified project areas within Rice County include:</p> <p>Risk assessments are being developed to determine appropriate immediate, short- and long-term resolution of (existing) and potential slope failures along portions of CSAH 11 adjacent to the high bank areas of Roberds Lake Boulevard.</p>
51	Drought	Promote water conservation measures to residents during periods of drought, and enforce water conservation ordinances when needed (i.e., that prohibit watering lawns during drought).	Ongoing	Promoting water conservation during periods of drought is a standing effort of the County and local governments. RC will work to address strategies for drought in the Rice County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan. The State of MN has a stateside drought response plan prepared by the MN DNR that the County may reference for guidance.
52	Wildfire	Continue to enforce burning permits/restrictions.	Ongoing	The MN DNR manages the burning permits for Rice County. The Sheriff will issue notices when there are burning restrictions in place, bans burning and lifts restrictions. The local fire departments help report illegal burning activities.

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
53	Wildfire	Evaluate the needs of local fire departments for wildland fire suppression in rural areas and acquire/install equipment as necessary. (i.e., portable dry water pumps, portable generators, or installation of dry hydrants).	Ongoing	<p>Rice County is served by a total of 8 fire departments.</p> <p>Wildfire is ranked as a low-risk hazard for Rice County. However there is little access to water resources in outlying areas not supported by a municipal water source.</p> <p>RC Emergency Management and local fire departments will consider needs for equipment or areas that might support a dry hydrant in order to better support wildland fire suppression. The MN DNR Forestry Dept. will be included in evaluation of potential projects and potential grant funding to support any dry hydrant projects.</p>
54	Wildfire	Continue to provide public education materials related to the prevention of forest fires and wildfires, particularly during dry spells or periods of drought.	Ongoing	<p>Fire prevention is held annually each October. City fire departments participate and provide an opportunity for citizens to learn fire safety with open houses. In addition to fire departments going to our schools to educate our youth, our local media also assists in sharing fire safety information to the public. RC Emergency Management helps to put out reminders on wildfire safety through the Sheriff's Office FB page, website & media releases (i.e., campfire safety).</p>
55	Wildfire	Ensure the strong coordination between local fire departments to provide fire protection, which will reduce the spread of wildfires.	Ongoing	<p>All of the municipal fire departments in the County have mutual aid agreements in place for structure & wildland fire support.</p>
56	Wildfire	Conduct a county-wide assessment of areas with significant wildfire potential, particularly those in in proximity to urban areas.	Ongoing	<p>MN DNR conducts statewide assessments for wildfire potential and the location of Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. Rice County Emergency Management and local fire departments will coordinate with MNDNR to remain up-to-date on a wildfire risk assessment for the County.</p>

#	Hazard	Mitigation Action	2025 Status	Comments
57	Wildfire	Promote positive forestry management techniques including the removal of dead, dry vegetation and trees which may ignite as a result of lightning or human related causes.	Ongoing	This is an on-going collaborative effort between local fire districts and the MN DNR.
58	Wildfire	Encourage the use of landscape design and creation of defensible space that will minimize the risk of wildfire to homes or other key facilities in high-risk areas.	Ongoing	This is an on-going collaborative effort between local fire districts and the MN DNR.
59	Dam Failure	Review and update the High Risk Dam Plan on a regular and/or as needed basis.	Ongoing	Rice County will work with MN DNR to review and update the High Risk Dam Plan on a regular and/or as needed basis to ensure that contact information remains up-to-date and accurate along with any changes in the populations within the inundation area and public warning capabilities for the affected populations. Frequency to be annually or sooner should any necessary changes become known.

Appendix F – Planning Team Meetings

Rice County HMP Planning Team Meeting #1

1/29/25 Meeting Summary & Documentation

Synopsis: On January 29, 2025 Rice County Emergency Management convened key county, city, and township representatives, as well as neighboring jurisdictions and other stakeholders to participate in the 1st Planning Team Meeting for the update of the Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). The meeting was held via Zoom webinar video conference and was facilitated by Stacey Stark and Bonnie Hundrieser of the U-Spatial@UMD project team.

The purpose of the meeting was to present on the update of the Rice County HMP update and gather stakeholder feedback on several key discussion items, including:

- 1) Prioritization of the natural hazards to be profiled in the plan,
- 2) Identification of local vulnerabilities (i.e., infrastructure and populations),
- 3) Ideas for local mitigation actions for implementation, and
- 4) Review of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding opportunities.

Stakeholder Invitations: Rice County Emergency Management invited all stakeholders included on the county's HMP Update Jurisdictional Contact List, which includes the key County Contacts, City Contacts, Township Contacts, Other Stakeholder Contacts, and Neighboring Jurisdiction Contacts identified to be invited to participate in the plan update process. Contacts were encouraged to engage additional staff or to send someone in their stead if they could not attend.

Presentation Overview: The Power Point presentation covered the following items:

- Welcome & Introductions
- Meeting Purpose & Agenda
- Overview of HMP Key Points
- Overview of Plan Content (Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, Vulnerability Analysis, Update of Hazard Prioritization)
- Overview of Mitigation Actions and FEMA Grants
- Overview of Mitigation Strategies for the development of mitigation actions
- Discussion of ideas for local mitigation ideas
- Overview of Next Steps following Planning Team Meeting #1

Materials: The following meeting summary includes documentation of the stakeholders that participated in the meeting, poll results, questions or comments provided during the meeting, and information on the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant Program. A list of stakeholders invited to participate is also included. A copy of the meeting invitation and a handout of the Power Point presentation slides accompany this meeting summary.

To submit comments or questions regarding this meeting summary, please contact:

Joseph Johnson, Rice County Emergency Management Director

joseph.johnson@RiceCountyMN.gov

Meeting Participants

Following is a list of representatives that participated in Planning Team Meeting #1. These individuals will be considered as part the formal planning team recorded in Table 1. Hazard Mitigation (HMP) Team of the Rice County HMP Update.

	Name	Organization	Job Title
1	Joseph Johnson	Rice County Emergency Management	Emergency Management Director
2	Andrew Yurek	Northfield Hospital + Clinics	Emergency Management / Safety Director
3	Josh Schoen	Rice County	County Assessor
4	Sandi Gerdes	Laura Baker Services Association	Executive Director
5	Kevin Babcock	Tri-City United Schools	Superintendent
6	Jesse Thomas	Rice County Sheriff	Sheriff
7	Zita Toth	St. Olaf College	Associate Director of Public Safety
8	Earl Merchlewitz	Goodhue County	Emergency Management Director
9	Samantha Schwartz	Rice County Facilities	Project Manager
10	Martha Williams	Rice County Public Health	EP Coordinator
11	Chad Hanson	MnDOT	Emergency Management Coordinator
12	Gabriel McCall	South Central College	Director of Facilities
13	Frances Boehning	City of Nerstrand	City Clerk
14	Dustin Dienst	City of Faribault Fire Dept.	Fire Chief
15	Thomas Hart	Bridgewater Township	Supervisor
16	Tammy Stewig	Le Sueur County Emergency Management	Director
17	Allan Klug	Rice County	IT Manager
18	Tim Zierden	MnDOT	Highway Maintenance Operations Superintendent
19	Blake	Carleton College	Director of Security Services
20	Dan Meier	Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric	Operations Manager
21	Jenny Larson	Three Rivers Community Action	Executive Director
22	Kain Smith	ISD 656	Director of Buildings & Grounds/Health & Safety
23	Matt Krenik,	Faribault Public Schools	Health and Safety Manager
24	Jessica Page	City of Dennison	Clerk
25	Julie Runkel	Rice County	Environmental Services Director
26	Jeremy Edwards	Rice County Environmental Services	Senior Planner
27	P.T. Haider	City of Northfield PD	Deputy Chief of Police
28	Todd Piepho	MN DNR	Area Hydrologist
29	Mike Wachholz	MN DNR	Fire Program Forester
30	Ellen Judd	City of Morristown	City Administrator

Discussion Polls

The presentation included several polling questions to generate discussion and gather specific feedback from participants that would be used to support public outreach, identify local vulnerabilities, and determine the updated prioritization of hazards for inclusion in the plan. Following are the polling questions and participant responses.

POLL #1 (Slide 9, Who Participates)

Question 1 - How can you expand participation by the county residents, including vulnerable populations, in the planning process?

Zita Toth	Utilizing social media and alternative forms of communication to reach different populations, particularly those who many not speak English or may speak English as a second language.
Jenny Larson	Work with community organizations, nonprofits, churches, schools, food shelf. Provide information in other languages - Spanish and Somali are important in Rice County
Josh Schoen	Communicate different methods - newspaper, social media, website, possible online surveys
Andrew Yurek	Housing complex owner, neighborhood HOAs
Martha Williams	One option may be to have discussions at outreach events in the community about the planning process.
Allan Klug	Internet Surveys / Meetings
Sandi Gerdes	Ensure timely notification of planning events, ensure that communication is targeted to people who use alternative communication methods.
Julie Runkel	Survey Monkey- distribute by Facebook, identify key individuals that already have connections w various vulnerable populations,
Jessica Page	Are Ag groups or farmers contacted?

Question 2 - Is there someone (or an organization) missing from this planning team who you think should be involved with the Hazard Mitigation Plan Development?

Jenny Larson	Senior centers and food shelves could help reach vulnerable populations
Tammy Stewig	City Emergency Managers
Andrew Yurek	Unknown but FDs are not in attendance today
Martha Williams	Not that we know of.
Jeremy Edwards	Fire/EMS/Hospitals
Sandi Gerdes	Elder services.
Julie Runkel	Hospital & School Districts, State Prison and schools, public health

POLL #2, Slide 13 (Plan Content – Vulnerability Analysis)

Question 1 - Are there any factors in your community that may have increased the community's vulnerability? (please identify community)

Jenny Larson	Climate change = more storms and higher insurance claims, making properties harder to	
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	insure; agree with increasing number of unhoused people	
Josh Schoen	Seems to be more extreme weather events. Heavy rains have cause severe flooding in area more than before. Increased runoff due to more pavement, tiling.	Morristown, Northfield & Faribault
Andrew Yurek	In the past 5 years we went from zero dialysis centers in Northfield, now there are 2	
Martha Williams	The flooding in June 2024 in Rice County may have increased vulnerability as well as a Skilled Nursing Facility in Northfield closing.	Rice County in general (Public Health perspective)
Jeremy Edwards	Recent floods	Lakes in west half of the county
Jessica Page	Aging infrastructure. Dennison is dealing with sewer infrastructure with infiltration issues. Last year's May and June rainfall resulted in several emergency discharges.	Dennison

Question 2 - Are there specific areas of concern in your community that you would consider to be more highly vulnerable to damages or danger resulting from future natural hazard events? (please identify community)

Jenny Larson	Mobile home parks are aging and need of repair/updates	
Josh Schoen	There are several manufacture home parks in the County	Morristown, Northfield & Faribault
Andrew Yurek	Larger (3 or more stories) senior living centers.	
Martha Williams	Our community has several mobile home parks and they seem to be more vulnerable to natural hazards. We also have a large non English speaking population and individuals with disabilities.	Rice County in general (Public Health perspective)
Jeremy Edwards	Campgrounds, mobile home parks, and shoreland developments - flooding impacts to wells, septic systems, and buildings	Lakes in west half of the county
Jessica Page	Sewer line infiltration	Dennison

POLL #3 (Slide 17) Rice County 2025 Update of Hazard Prioritization

Meeting participants ranked each of the natural hazards listed below as what they felt was a high, moderate, or low hazard priority to include in the plan update.

Which of the following hazards would you consider HIGH priority in your county?

Tornadoes	15
Flood	13
Winter Storms	11
Windstorms	10

Hail Storms	10
Lightning	6
Extreme Cold	4
Drought	4
Dam/Levee Failure	4
Extreme Heat	3
Wildfire	2
Landslides	2
Land Subsidence	0

Would you consider any of the hazards below to be low risk, low priority, or not applicable in your county?

Land Subsidence	10
Landslides	9
Dam/Levee Failure	6
Wildfire	6
Extreme Cold	4
Extreme Heat	3
Drought	3
Windstorms	1
Lightning	1
Flood	0
Winter Storms	0
Tornadoes	0
Hail Storms	0

The chart below reflects the planning team’s updated prioritization of hazards that will be included in the Rice County 2025 HMP Update.

HAZARD	Rice County 2025
Flooding	High
Winter Storms	High
Tornadoes	High
Hail	Moderate
Windstorms	Moderate
Lightning	Moderate
Extreme Cold	Moderate
Drought	Moderate
Dam/Levee Failure	Moderate
Extreme Heat	Low
Wildfire	Low
Landslides	Low

Other Comments or Questions

Following are additional comments or questions addressed during the planning team meeting and responses from meeting presenters:

Regarding Landslides:

- Julie Runkel, Rice County Environmental Services - We just had some major slope failures from the extensive rainfall events. Shoreland areas.

Regarding future mitigation ideas / FEMA HMA grant funding:

- Dustin Dienst, City of Faribault - We have some mitigation projects from the June flooding issues. We are researching mitigation to a dam that was damaged. We are looking at changes to the dam along with or opposed to just replacing it.
- Andrew Yurek, Northfield Hospitals + Clinics - Portable water filtration system to make potable water.

FEMA HMA Grant Funding:

As part of the planning team meeting, participants were informed that having a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in place is a requirement in order to apply for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant Programs. Examples of eligible projects were reviewed for participants to consider for potential inclusion in their local mitigation action charts, as applicable. It was noted that representatives from the county, local governments, and other stakeholder agencies/organizations must have documented participation in the planning process in order to formally adopt the plan and be eligible to apply for future FEMA HMA grants.

To learn more about FEMA's HMA grant programs, please review the following:

[FEMA Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide, Effective July 30, 2024](#)

At a glance info: See Table 4, Eligible Activities by Program (page 43)

RICE COUNTY HMP JURISDICTIONAL CONTACT LIST

Following is a list of the stakeholders that received an invitation to participate in Planning Team Mtg. #1 and will receive the meeting summary.

To submit suggested additions to this contact list, please contact Rice County Emergency Management and provide the name of the jurisdiction, agency, or organization along with the person's full name, work title, and email address.

REPRESENTATION	NAME	TITLE
Rice County Emergency Management	Joseph Johnson	Emergency Management Director
Rice County Emergency Management	Jon Bolser	Deputy EM Director
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Jim Purfeerst	Commissioner, District 1
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Galen Malecha	Commissioner, District 2
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Gerry Hoisington	Commissioner, District 3
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Steve Underdahl	Commissioner, District 4
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Jeff Docken	Commissioner, District 5
Rice County Administration	Sara Folsted	County Administrator
Rice County Sheriff's Office	Jesse Thomas	Sheriff
Rice County Highway Department	Dennis Luebbe	Highway Engineer
Rice County Environmental Services Dept.	Julie Runkel	Environmental Services Director
Rice County Environmental Services Dept.	Trent McCorkell	Zoning Administrator
Rice County Parks & Facilities	Samantha Schwartz	Project Manager Parks & Facilities
Rice County Assessor's Office	Joshua Schoen	County Assessor
Rice County I.T.	Allan Klug	IT Manager
Rice County Community Services	Rick Gieseke	Community Services
Rice County Public Health	Deb Purfeerst	Public Health Director
Rice County Public Health	Martha Williams	PHEP Coordinator
Rice County Public Health	Angie Nagel	Supervisor - Public Health Disease Prevention / Emergency Preparedness
City of Dennison (<i>partly in Goodhue County</i>)	Jeff Flaten	Mayor
City of Dennison (<i>partly in Goodhue County</i>)	Jessica Page	City Clerk
City of Dundas	Jenelle Teppen	City Administrator
City of Dundas	Glenn Switzer	Mayor
City of Dundas	Todd Hanson	Police Chief
City of Faribault	Kevin Voracek	Mayor
City of Faribault	Jessica Kinser	City Administrator
City of Faribault	Dustin Dienst	Fire Chief/EM
City of Lonsdale	Joel Erickson	City Administrator
City of Lonsdale	Tim Rud	Mayor
City of Lonsdale	Joe Pumper	Fire Chief

City of Morristown	Tony Lindahl	Mayor
City of Morristown	Bruce Morris	Fire Chief
City of Morristown	Ellen Judd	City Administrator
City of Nerstrand	Frances Boehning	City Clerk
City of Nerstrand	Todd Evavold	Mayor
City of Nerstrand	Nate Bonde	Asst. Fire Chief
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	Ben Martig	City Administrator
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	Tom Nelson	Fire Chief
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	Paul Haider	Deputy Chief
Bridgewater Township	Lori Noreen	Clerk
Cannon City Township	Marilyn Caron	Clerk
Erin Township	Sharon Kaisershot	Clerk
Forest Township	Ashley Anderson	Clerk
Morristown Township	Dawn Nuetzman	Clerk
Northfield Township	Tom Tanghe	Clerk
Richland Township	Robert Sommers	Clerk
Shieldsville Township	Sue Ceplecha-Novak	Clerk
Walcott Township	Kourtney Spitzack	Clerk
Warsaw Township	Debra DeGrood	Clerk
Webster Township	Roger VanVeldhuizen	Clerk
Wells Township	Jim Zahn	Clerk
Wheatland Township	Jim Duban	Clerk
Wheeling Township	Rebecca Vergin	Clerk
LOCAL & REGIONAL AGENCIES INVOLVED IN HAZARD MITIGATION		
Rice Soil and Water Conservation District	Steven Pahs	District Manager
USDA FSA	Taylor Carlson	Area Specialist
USDA Rural Development	Charles Phillips	Area Specialist
USDA Natural Resources/Conservation Services	Christopher Schmidt	District Conservationist
MN DNR	Mike Wachholz	Forester
MN DNR Big Woods State Park	Drew Wilwert	Park Supervisor
MN HSEM	Michael Peterson	RPC - Southeast Region 1
MN DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division	Todd Piepho	Hydrologist
MnDOT District 6	Chad Hanson	Emergency Management Coordinator
BUSINESSES, ACADEMIA, AND OTHER PRIVATE ORGS.		
St Olaf College	Derek Kruse	Public Safety Director
Carleton College	Blake Held	Public Safety Director
MN State Academies for Blind & Deaf	Terry Wilding	Superintendent
South Central College	Dr. Annette Parker	President
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown School District	John Regan	Superintendent

Northfield School District	Matt Hillmann	Superintendent
Faribault School District	Jamie Bente	Superintendent
Tri-City United School District	Kevin Babcock	Superintendent
Northfield Hospitals + Clinics	Andrew Yurek	Emergency Management / Safety Director
Goodhue County Cooperative Electric	Kelly Hovel	General Manager
Dakota Electric Association	Brandon Lunde	Utility Services Manager
Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative	Mike Otteson	Technical Services Supervisor
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric	Dan Meier	Operations Manager
NONPROFIT ORGS/COMMUNITY-BASED ORGS THAT WORK WITH UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES AND SOCIALLY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS		
Laura Baker Services	Sandi Gerdes	Executive Director
Three Rivers Community Action	Jennifer Larson	Executive Director
Salvation Army	Tom Kuelbs	Minnesota Field Representative
American Red Cross	Sean Farley Cowdin	Disaster Program Manager
Community Action Center - Northfield	Anika Rychner	Senior Director
NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS		
Le Sueur County Emergency Management	Tammy Stewig	Emergency Management Director
Goodhue County Emergency Management	Earl Merchlewitz	Emergency Management Director
Scott County Emergency Management	Scott Haas	Emergency Management Director
Dakota County Emergency Management	Kelly Miller	Emergency Management Director
Waseca County Emergency Management	Denise Wright	Emergency Management Director
Steele County Emergency Management	Kristen sailer	Emergency Management Director
Dodge County Emergency Management	Matt Maas	Emergency Management Director

From: [Joseph Johnson](#)
To: [Joseph Johnson](#); [Jon Bolster](#); [Jim Purfeerst](#); [Galen Malecha](#); [Gerry Hoisington](#); [Steve Underdahl](#); [Jeff Docken](#); [Sara Folsted](#); [Jesse Thomas](#); [Dennis Luebbe](#); [Julie Runkel](#); [Trent McCorkell](#); [Samantha Schwartz](#); [Joshua Schoen](#); [Allan Klug](#); [Rick Gieseke](#); [Deb Purfeerst](#); [Martha Williams](#); [Angie Nagel](#); [jflaten19@gmail.com](#); [cityofdennison@yahoo.com](#); [jteppen@dundas.us](#); [glennofdundas@gmail.com](#); [Todd Hanson](#); [Mayor@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [jkinser@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [ddienst@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [jerickson@lonsdalemn.com](#); [mayorrud04@gmail.com](#); [jpumper@lonsdalemn.com](#); [tlindahl@ci.morristown.mn.us](#); [morristownfire6100@gmail.com](#); [ejudd@ci.morristown.mn.us](#); [cityclerknerstrand@gmail.com](#); [evavold6@gmail.com](#); [natebonde@gmail.com](#); [ben.martig@ci.northfield.mn.us](#); [tom.nelson@nafrs.org](#); [paul.haider@ci.northfield.mn.us](#); [clerk@bridgewaterwp.org](#); [caronmarilyn11@gmail.com](#); [skaisershot@frontiernet.net](#); [foresttwpcerk@gmail.com](#); [morristownmnclerk@gmail.com](#); [clerk@northfieldtwp.org](#); [richland.ricecounty@gmail.com](#); [suecnovak@gmail.com](#); [walcottownship@gmail.com](#); [warsawwp@yahoo.com](#); [webster.township@yahoo.com](#); [jpszahn46@gmail.com](#); [jkduban@lonstel.com](#); [wheelingtwnship@gmail.com](#); [Steven.Pahs@riceswcd.org](#); [taylor.carlson@usda.gov](#); [charles.phillips@usda.gov](#); [chris.schmidt@usda.gov](#); [michael.wachholz@state.mn.us](#); [david.wilwert@state.mn.us](#); [michael.r.peterson@state.mn.us](#); [todd.piepho@state.mn.us](#); [chad.hanson@state.mn.us](#); [kruse6@stolaf.edu](#); [bheld@carleton.edu](#); [terry.wilding@msa.state.mn.us](#); [annette.parker@southcentral.edu](#); [jregan@wem.k12.mn.us](#); [mhillmann@northfieldschools.org](#); [jbente@faribault.k12.mn.us](#); [kbackcock@tcu2905.us](#); [yureka@northfieldhospital.org](#); [kh@gccea.com](#); [blunde@dakotaelectric.com](#); [mikeot@mvec.net](#); [dmeier@swce.coop](#); [sandi@laurabaker.org](#); [jlarson@threeriverscap.org](#); [tom.kuelbs@usc.salvationarmy.org](#); [sean.farleycowdin@redcross.org](#); [rychner.anika@communityactioncenter.org](#); [tstewig@co.le-sueur.mn.us](#); [earl.merchlewitz@co.goodhue.mn.us](#); [shaas@co.scott.mn.us](#); [kelly.miller@co.dakota.mn.us](#); [denise.wright@co.waseca.mn.us](#); [kristen.sailer@steelecountymn.gov](#); [matt.maas@dodgecountymn.gov](#)
Cc: [Bonnie K Hundrieser](#); [Stacey Stark](#)
Subject: RICE COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE – MEETING INVITATION
Date: Friday, December 13, 2024 8:17:31 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Greetings,

Your presence is requested at a Planning Team Meeting for the update of the **Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan**. You are requested to participate in this meeting because you have a position of administrative or departmental responsibility within the county, a municipal government, or are a key stakeholder related to the planning process. Emergency Managers from neighboring jurisdictions are also encouraged to attend so we may strengthen our shared mitigation efforts.

We will be holding the meeting virtually using Zoom conferencing:

Date: Wednesday, January 29, 2025

Time: 1:00-2:30 PM

RSVP: https://umn-private.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_E73TEaEyQ_2hEPGsOziMQg

(Ctrl+Click to follow link) When you register, you will be placed on an RSVP list and will be sent an email confirmation. If you are not able to attend, please seek to send another representative in your stead.

About the Hazard Mitigation Plan

In order to maintain eligibility for FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Grant Program funding, the county's hazard mitigation plan must be updated every 5 years. Our last plan is due for an update and our planning is currently underway. The plan addresses the natural hazards that face Rice County and will result in the identification of mitigation actions that will help to reduce or eliminate the impact of future hazard events.

Meeting Information

This meeting will be facilitated by personnel from U-Spatial at the University of MN Duluth who are

working closely with us on this project. The purpose of this meeting is to present on the update of the Rice County HMP update and gather stakeholder feedback on several key discussion items, including:

- 1) Prioritization of the natural hazards to be profiled in the plan,
- 2) Identification of local vulnerabilities (i.e., infrastructure and populations),
- 3) Ideas for local mitigation actions for implementation, and
- 4) Review of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding opportunities.

About FEMA HMA Grant Funding:

To learn more about FEMA’s HMA grant programs, please review the following:

[FEMA Mitigation Assistance Program and Policy Guide, Effective July 30, 2024](#)

At a glance info: See Table 4, Eligible Activities by Program (page 43)

Please note that representatives from the county, local governments, and other stakeholder agencies/organizations **must** have documented participation in the planning process in order to formally adopt the plan and be eligible to apply for future FEMA HMA grants.

We look forward to you joining us for this important meeting.

Thank you,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

Badge #1156

Rice County Sheriff's Office

Office (507) 332-6119 **Cell** (507) 838-8523

Email joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

Address 50 East View Dr - Faribault, MN 55021

Web www.ricecountymn.gov

Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025 Planning Team Meeting #1

JANUARY 29, 2025



Welcome & Introductions

U-Spatial@UMD Project Leads



Zach Vavra
Project Manager
U-Spatial@UMD



Bonnie Hundrieser
HM Planning Specialist
Hundrieser Consulting LLC

Rice County Project Lead

- Joseph Johnson, Rice County
Emergency Management Director



Please type your name and representation in the CHAT – so others know who is here

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Meeting Participation

To make a comment or ask a question, please use the chat or raise your hand to speak.

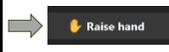
PLEASE REMAIN MUTED AND VIDEO OFF SO EVERYONE CAN HAVE THE BEST EXPERIENCE.

USE CHAT:

- To send a message to everyone
- To send a message to individuals or the presenters
- To send a message to host to ask for help or ask a question that isn't for the whole group. The host is Zach Vavra.



ASK TO SPEAK:



PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Meeting Purpose & Agenda



The purpose of this meeting is to formally convene the Rice County HMP Planning Team for a presentation on the plan update and to discuss key items required for the plan update.

Agenda

- Overview of HMP Key Points
- Review of Past Plan Hazard Risk Priorities, Hazard Profiles, and Current Hazard Prioritization
- Overview of Mitigation Strategies
- Overview of FEMA HMA grant program
- Discuss local mitigation ideas
- Overview of Next Steps

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Overview of HMP Key Points

RICE COUNTY 2025 HMP UPDATE

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Plan Requirement



The Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) is a requirement of the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000).

- The development of a local government plan is required to maintain eligibility for FEMA HMA grant programs.
 - Plans must be updated every 5 years.
 - Must address all jurisdictions and engage key stakeholders + the public
 - Must be approved by FEMA for meeting all federal requirements.
- Last plan was adopted in 2019.
 - The updated plan will cover a 5-year window for implementation and grant program eligibility (2026-2031)
 - Participating jurisdictions must have documented engagement in the planning process and adopt the final plan.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Plan Purpose



The purpose of the HMP is to:

- **Conduct risk assessment** (history, future probability, impacts of natural hazards)
- **Conduct vulnerability assessment** (at-risk critical infrastructure and populations)
- **Conduct capabilities assessment** (plans, programs, policies, partnerships, funding, etc in place or that are lacking)
- **Develop plan of action** (strategies and mitigation actions for implementation).

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Who the Plan Covers

This is a **multi-jurisdictional plan** that covers Rice County, including all cities and townships within the county.



The plan also takes into consideration the needs and concerns of other stakeholders such as schools, watershed districts, and agencies or organizations involved in mitigation or services to vulnerable populations within the county.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Who Participates



Key Stakeholders

Local government as well as related non-governmental agencies & organizations must participate.

- 2 planning team meetings
- Public outreach
- Provision of local information (LMS forms, other data)
- Mitigation Action Charts
- Final plan review

The Public

The public must have an opportunity to learn about and provide input to the plan update.

- Use of news releases, social media, local bulletin boards, and public meetings or events.
- Must document local-level concerns and mitigation ideas
- Consider how to engage with underserved communities and vulnerable populations.

POLL #1

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Overview of Plan Content

RICE COUNTY 2025 HMP UPDATE

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Plan Content

Hazard Identification

- The HMP addresses the **natural hazards** that pose risk to the county and its jurisdictions.
- Manmade hazards are not required to be addressed (per the DMA of 2000).
- Hazards that are deemed to be of low risk may be omitted from the plan.
- Hazard risk may differ in cities and the county overall.

Flooding	Hail	Drought
Dam/Levee Failure	Lightning	Extreme Heat
Wildfire	Winter Storms	Extreme Cold
Windstorms	Landslides	Earthquakes
Tornadoes	Sinkholes & Karst	Coastal Erosion

Natural hazard categories as per the State Hazard Mitigation Plan

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Plan Content

Risk Assessment

- History of events
- Probability of occurrence
- Severity
- Climate Change
- Identify if and how risk priorities have changed since the last plan. (Increased / Decreased)



PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Plan Content *Vulnerability Analysis*

- Inventory of critical infrastructure.
- Identify specific, local-level impacts and vulnerabilities.
- Includes local-level capabilities assessment that supports mitigation or identifies gaps
- Identify any factors (e.g. new development) that may increase the community's vulnerability.
- Review social vulnerability factors.



POLL #2

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Timeframe for development & Plan Format

Timeframe:

The planning process generally occurs over the course of 14-18 months from start to finish.

- The Rice County Plan will be completed in 2025.

Format:

- PDF document (paper version)
- Interactive website companion
- Developed and hosted by U-Spatial at UMD



Example of HMP website

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Hazard Prioritization

REVIEW OF THE HAZARD RISK PRIORITIES FOR RICE COUNTY

Rice County Past Prioritization of Hazards

This is at a county level

HAZARD	Rice 2019
Flooding	High
Winter Storms	High
Windstorms	High
Tornadoes	High
Hail	High
Lightning	High
Extreme Cold	Moderate
Extreme Heat	Moderate
Drought	Low
Wildfire	Low
Landslides	High
Land Subsidence	n/a
Dam/Levee Failure	Low

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Rice County 2025 Update of Hazard Prioritization

Considerations:

- Increase/Decrease of events
- Local vulnerabilities (impacts)
- New development/population growth

HAZARD	Rice 2025
Flooding	
Winter Storms	
Windstorms	
Tornadoes	
Hail	
Lightning	
Extreme Cold	
Extreme Heat	
Drought	
Wildfire	
Landslides	
Land Subsidence	
Dam/Levee Failure	

POLL #3

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Hazard Prioritization Poll results and discussion

Do any of these countywide hazards NOT apply in a city?

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Comments or Questions?

Overview of Mitigation Actions & FEMA grants

DEVELOPMENT OF MITIGATION ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR FEMA HAZARD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE GRANT FUNDING

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Mitigation Action Charts



MACs reflect each jurisdiction's plan of action to reduce the impacts of future natural hazard events. They are based on the information gathered from each community during the planning process.

- **Must** address hazards of moderate to high priority.
- **Must** address identified local vulnerabilities.
- **Must** identify priority, status, timeframe, responsibility, how incorporation/implementation will occur, and possible funding.

★ Eligible FEMA HMA grant activities **must** be identified in the risk assessment and plan of action.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

CITY OF BALATON				Mitigation Action Chart			
#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
5	Extreme Cold	Education & Awareness Programs	Conduct outreach to property owners on how to avoid freezing pipes during periods of extreme cold.	Existing High 2025-2030	City Admin / City EM	We do this as part of our outreach during periods of extreme cold. We remind homeowners to run a stream of hot water to avoid frozen pipes during periods of extreme cold.	City Funding
6	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Obtain a portable generator for our City Hall and Community Center that serves as our local shelter if people are displaced from a severe storm event or extended power outage.	New High 2025-2030	City EM / City Public Works	The city will work to purchase a generator as funding is available. If necessary we will seek possible outside grant funding.	City Funding, FEMA 5% Initiative Grant Funding
7	Severe Summer Storms	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work with the local mobile home park owner to construct a storm shelter or tornado safe room.	New High 2025-2030	City EM, Public Works	The city will work with our local mobile home park operator to evaluate possible shelter solutions, or to establish an alternate facility location for residents to take shelter. The city would work with Leon County Emergency Management to seek potential FEMA grant funding for a tornado safe room.	City Funding, FEMA, BRAC grant funding
8	Drought	Local Planning & Regulation / Education & Awareness Programs	Establish and enforce watering use restrictions when in periods of severe drought and raise public awareness of water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2025-2030	City Admin	The city will enforce emergency water use restrictions as per direction from the MS DNR. The city will also do outreach to help make residents aware of limitations on non-essential water use. We recently developed a new lawn irrigation ordinance.	City Funding
9	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Implement new storm sewer upgrades as construction projects and purchase additional pumps in the event of flooding.	Existing Moderate 2025-2030	City Public Works	Our public works staff monitors and addresses any stormwater infrastructure upgrades and equipment as needed.	City Funding



FEMA HMA Grant Funding



Example eligible grant activities:

- All applicants **must** be covered by an approved HMP and have formally adopted the plan.
- Projects **must** be addressed in the risk assessment and be identified in the plan of action.
- Several different grant programs
- State Hazard Mitigation Officer is the main POC for questions
- Property Acquisition
- Tornado Safe Rooms
- Burying Powerlines
- Wildfire Mitigation
- Soil Stabilization
- Minor Localized Flood Reduction
- Green Infrastructure
- "5% Initiative" (e.g. warning systems, generators, public awareness/education campaigns)

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Overview of Mitigation Strategies

THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES ARE RECOMMENDED GUIDANCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL MITIGATION ACTIONS



LOCAL PLANNING & REGULATIONS

These actions include policies or codes that influence the way land is developed and structures are built, and also incorporate mitigation into other plans.

- Limit or restrict development in floodplain areas
- Adopt and enforce building codes
- Improve stormwater management planning
- Incorporate mitigation into comp plans
- Enforce watering / burning restrictions during periods of drought



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

STRUCTURE & INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

These actions protect structures and infrastructure by changing them or removing them from danger.

- Construction of tornado safe rooms.
- Burying powerlines
- Property acquisition for properties at risk to repetitive flooding or failure to landslides
- Infrastructure retrofit (upsizing culverts, other road & bridge projects)
- Protection of vulnerable critical infrastructure such as lift stations and Fire Halls



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

NATURAL SYSTEMS PROTECTION

These actions use a natural systems approach to minimize damage and losses from natural hazard events.

- Tree management near roads & powerlines
- Floodplain and stream restoration
- Soil stabilization on at-risk slopes
- Wildfire fuels reduction & defensible space
- Living snow fences to reduce drifting
- Rain gardens to slow impacts of rain events



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

EDUCATION & AWARENESS PROGRAMS

These actions inform and educate the community to raise awareness of hazards and ways to mitigate risk.

- Promoting sign up for CodeRED etc.
- Sharing information on severe weather awareness
- Promoting personal preparedness
- Tornado season education
- Outreach to vulnerable populations
- Wildfire safety (creation of defensible space, burning restrictions)



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

MITIGATION PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE SUPPORT

These actions are typically not considered mitigation, but support reduction of the effects of damaging natural hazard events.

- Flood fight plans and equipment
- Installing generator backup power
- Development of EOPs
- Shelter planning and training
- Working with facilities that care for vulnerable populations (e.g. schools, nursing homes)
- Installation of outdoor warning sirens.
- Joining MnWARN for utility disaster mutual aid



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Comments or Questions?

Do you have any ideas for specific mitigation activities for implementation?

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER



Following Planning Team Meeting #1

COMPLETION OF LOCAL MITIGATION SURVEY FORMS

Representatives from Rice County and each city jurisdiction will participate in filling out Local Mitigation Survey forms. These forms include:

- Local hazard identification & risk prioritization.
- Local vulnerabilities (critical infrastructure, populations or assets)
- Local-level capabilities (programs, polices, staff, funding)
- Review past mitigation actions/identify new mitigation projects.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Questions?

What questions do you have for U-Spatial@UMD about development of the HMP or next steps?

PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Contact Information

Zachary Vavra
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 218-726-6871

Bonnie Hundrieser, HM Planner
Hundrieser Consulting LLC
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 218-343-3468



PRESENTER: ZACH VAVRA

Rice County HMP Planning Team Meeting #2

10/9/25 Meeting Summary & Documentation

Summary: On October 9, 2025, Rice County Emergency Management convened key county, city, and township representatives, as well as neighboring jurisdictions and other stakeholders to participate in the 2nd and final Planning Team Meeting for the update of the Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). The purpose of the meeting was to formally convene the Rice County HMP Planning Team for a presentation on the draft plan and discussion of key items prior to public review and submission of the plan to HSEM and FEMA. The meeting was held via Zoom webinar video conference and was facilitated by Stacey Stark and Bonnie Hundrieser of the U-Spatial@UMD project team.

Stakeholder Invitations: Rice County Emergency Management invited all stakeholders included on the county's HMP Update Jurisdictional Contact List (JCL), which includes the key County Contacts, City Contacts, Township Contacts, Other Stakeholder Contacts, and Neighboring Jurisdiction Contacts identified to be invited to participate in the plan update process. Contacts were encouraged to engage additional staff or to send someone in their stead if they could not attend. A copy of the county's Jurisdictional Contact List is included with this meeting summary.

Meeting Participants: A total of **31** people attended the meeting. Representation included elected officials and departmental staff from Rice County and the cities of Dennison, Dundas, Lonsdale, Morristown, Nerstrand, and Northfield. The city of Faribault was not available to participate and were not in attendance. Other stakeholders, including neighboring jurisdictions, participated in the meeting. A participant list is provided below:

- 1 Joseph Johnson, Rice County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Director
- 2 Jesse Thomas, Rice County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff
- 3 Dennis Luebbe, Rice County Highway Dept., County Engineer
- 4 Debra Purfeerst, Rice County Public Health, Director
- 5 Josh Schoen, Rice County, County Assessor
- 6 Martha Sykes, Rice County Public Health, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator/Health Educator
- 7 Sara Folsted, Rice County, County Administrator
- 8 Julie Runkel, Rice County Environmental Services, Environmental Services Director
- 9 Allan Klug, Rice County, IT Manager
- 11 Jeffrey Flaten, City of Dennison, Mayor
- 12 Todd Hanson, City of Dundas Police Dept., Chief of Police
- 13 Joel Erickson, City of Lonsdale, City Administrator
- 14 Ellen Judd, City of Morristown, City Administrator
- 15 Jeanette Baalson, City of Nerstrand, Deputy Clerk
- 16 David Bennett, City of Northfield, Public Works Director/City Engineer
- 10 Diane Johnson, Wheatland Township, Supervisor
- 17 Steven Pahs, Rice Soil and Water Conservation District, Manager
- 18 Jeffrey Bunch, MnDOT, Bridge Scoping Engineer/EM Coordinator
- 19 Todd Piepho, MN DNR, Area Hydrologist

- 20 Mike Wachholz, MN DNR -Forestry, Fire Program Forester
- 21 Anika Rychner, Community Action Center, Senior Director
- 22 Larry Alderks, Bridgewater, Supervisor
- 23 Andy Yurek, Northfield Hospital + Clinics, Emergency Management / Safety
- 24 Penny Hillemann, Laura Baker Services Association, Asst. Program Director
- 25 Blake Held, Carleton College, Director of Security
- 26 Jav Jodsaas, ISD2905, Facilities Director
- 27 Mark Winter, WEM School District, Superintendent
- 28 Jeff Favreau, St Olaf Public Safety, Director
- 29 Ritu Raju, South Central College, President
- 30 Earl Merchlewitz, Goodhue County, EM Director
- 31 Tammy Stewig, Le Sueur County Emergency Management, Director

Presentation Overview: The PowerPoint presentation covered the following items about the process and content of the plan update. A PDF of the presentation slides is included with this meeting summary.

- Meeting Purpose and Agenda
- About the Project Team
- Overview of Plan Update
- Who the Plan Covers
- Who Needs to Participate
- Overview of the Structure of the HMP (Website and PDF)
- Prioritization of Natural Hazards
- Review of Risk Assessment Factors and Hazard Profiles
- Overview of Mitigation Action Charts and FEMA HMA Grant Funding
- Review of Mitigation Strategies and Actions
- Open Discussion (Comments and Questions)
- Discussion of Next Steps & answer your questions

The opening PowerPoint presentation covered a re-cap of key points about the plan update, a review of the Risk Assessment & Vulnerability Analysis, an overview of FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant funding; an overview of how mitigation actions are developed and an overview of the jurisdictional Mitigation Action Charts (MACs). Following the presentation, participants were provided with an opportunity to review and discuss the county and local mitigation action charts. This discussion period offered a facilitated opportunity for participants to consider any changes or new additions to the MACs prior to completion of the draft plan for public review.

RICE COUNTY HMP PLANNING TEAM MEETING #2 DISCUSSION NOTES

Sara Folsted - Are we able to share the website with our County Board members?

Bonnie Hundrieser response: Hi Sara, yes - however it's not completely done yet. So if you share it please note that the completed version will be available when we conduct the government and public review periods coming up this fall.

Jav Jodsaas - Do School districts need to complete anything for the County?

Bonnie Hundrieser response: There is nothing the school districts need to complete, unless they have a potential mitigation project they might seek FEMA grant funding for. Then I would need information to include in the plan. School districts do not need to complete an adopting resolution unless they were to seek to apply for FEMA grant funding.

Meeting Conclusion: The meeting concluded with an overview and timeline of the upcoming next steps for public review and submission of the draft plan to HSEM and FEMA for final review and approval.

Included with this meeting summary are the following:

- Rice County HMP Jurisdictional Contact List
- Meeting Invitation to Stakeholders
- PowerPoint Presentation Slides

Meeting Summary Prepared By: Bonnie Hundrieser, U-Spatial@UMD Project Team

RICE COUNTY HMP JURISDICTIONAL CONTACT LIST

Following is a list of the stakeholders that received an invitation to participate in Planning Team Mtg. #2 and will receive the meeting summary.

REPRESENTATION	NAME	TITLE
Rice County Emergency Management	Joseph Johnson	Emergency Management Director
Rice County Emergency Management	Jon Bolser	Deputy EM Director
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Jim Purfeerst	Commissioner, District 1
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Galen Malecha	Commissioner, District 2
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Gerry Hoisington	Commissioner, District 3
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Steve Underdahl	Commissioner, District 4
Rice County Board of Commissioners	Jeff Docken	Commissioner, District 5
Rice County Administration	Sara Folsted	County Administrator
Rice County Sheriff's Office	Jesse Thomas	Sheriff
Rice County Highway Department	Dennis Luebbe	Highway Engineer
Rice County Environmental Services Dept.	Julie Runkel	Environmental Services Director
Rice County Environmental Services Dept.	Trent McCorkell	Zoning Administrator
Rice County Parks & Facilities	Samantha Schwartz	Project Manager Parks & Facilities
Rice County Assessor's Office	Joshua Schoen	County Assessor
Rice County I.T.	Allan Klug	IT Manager
Rice County Community Services	Rick Gieseke	Community Services
Rice County Public Health	Deb Purfeerst	Public Health Director
Rice County Public Health	Martha Williams	PHEP Coordinator
Rice County Public Health	Angie Nagel	Supervisor - Public Health Disease Prevention / Emergency Preparedness
City of Dennison (<i>partly in Goodhue County</i>)	Jeff Flaten	Mayor
City of Dennison (<i>partly in Goodhue County</i>)	Jessica Page	City Clerk
City of Dundas	Jenelle Teppen	City Administrator
City of Dundas	Glenn Switzer	Mayor
City of Dundas	Todd Hanson	Police Chief
City of Faribault	Kevin Voracek	Mayor
City of Faribault	Jessica Kinser	City Administrator
City of Faribault	Dustin Dienst	Fire Chief/EM
City of Lonsdale	Joel Erickson	City Administrator
City of Lonsdale	Tom Berg	Mayor
City of Lonsdale	Joe Pumper	Fire Chief
City of Morristown	Tony Lindahl	Mayor
City of Morristown	Bruce Morris	Fire Chief
City of Morristown	Ellen Judd	City Administrator
City of Nerstrand	Frances Boehning	City Clerk
City of Nerstrand	Todd Evavold	Mayor

City of Nerstrand	Nate Bonde	Asst. Fire Chief
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	Ben Martig	City Administrator
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	David Bennett	Public Works Director
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	Tom Nelson	Fire Chief
City of Northfield (<i>partly in Dakota County</i>)	Paul Haider	Deputy Chief
Bridgewater Township	Lori Noreen	Clerk
Cannon City Township	Marilyn Caron	Clerk
Erin Township	Sharon Kaisershot	Clerk
Forest Township	Ashley Anderson	Clerk
Morristown Township	Dawn Nuetzman	Clerk
Northfield Township	Tom Tanghe	Clerk
Richland Township	Robert Sommers	Clerk
Shieldsville Township	Sue Ceplecha-Novak	Clerk
Walcott Township	Kourtney Spitzack	Clerk
Warsaw Township	Debra DeGrood	Clerk
Webster Township	Roger VanVeldhuizen	Clerk
Wells Township	Jim Zahn	Clerk
Wheatland Township	Jim Duban	Clerk
Wheeling Township	Rebecca Vergin	Clerk
LOCAL & REGIONAL AGENCIES INVOLVED IN HAZARD MITIGATION		
MN HSEM	Mike Peterson	HSEM Region 1 RPC
Rice Soil and Water Conservation District	Steven Pahs	District Manager
USDA FSA	Taylor Carlson	Area Specialist
USDA Rural Development	Charles Phillips	Area Specialist
USDA Natural Resources/Conservation Services	Christopher Schmidt	District Conservationist
MN DNR	Mike Wachholz	Forester
MN DNR Big Woods State Park	Alexa Smith	Park Supervisor
MN DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division	Todd Piepho	Hydrologist
MnDOT District 6	Chad Hanson	Emergency Management Coordinator
BUSINESSES, ACADEMIA, AND OTHER PRIVATE ORGS.		
St Olaf College	Jeffrey Favreau	Public Safety Director
Carleton College	Blake Held	Public Safety Director
MN State Academies for Blind & Deaf	Terry Wilding	Superintendent
South Central College	Dr. Ritu Raju	President
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown School District	Mark Winter	Superintendent
Northfield School District	Matt Hillmann	Superintendent

Faribault School District	Jamie Bente	Superintendent
Tri-City United School District	Kevin Babcock	Superintendent
Northfield Hospitals + Clinics	Andrew Yurek	Emergency Management / Safety Director
Goodhue County Cooperative Electric	Kelly Hovel	General Manager
Dakota Electric Association	Brandon Lunde	Utility Services Manager
Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative	Mike Otteson	Technical Services Supervisor
Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric	Dan Meier	Operations Manager
NONPROFIT ORGS/COMMUNITY-BASED ORGS THAT WORK WITH UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES AND SOCIALLY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS		
Laura Baker Services	Sandi Gerdes	Executive Director
Three Rivers Community Action	Jennifer Larson	Executive Director
Salvation Army	Tom Kuelbs	Minnesota Field Representative
American Red Cross	Sean Farley Cowdin	Disaster Program Manager
Community Action Center - Northfield	Anika Rychner	Senior Director
NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS		
Le Sueur County Emergency Management	Tammy Stewig	Emergency Management Director
Goodhue County Emergency Management	Earl Merchlewitz	Emergency Management Director
Scott County Emergency Management	Scott Haas	Emergency Management Director
Dakota County Emergency Management	Kelly Miller	Emergency Management Director
Waseca County Emergency Management	Denise Wright	Emergency Management Director
Steele County Emergency Management	Kristen sailer	Emergency Management Director
Dodge County Emergency Management	Matt Maas	Emergency Management Director

From: [Joseph Johnson](#)
To: [Joseph Johnson](#); [Jon Bolster](#); [Jim Purfeerst](#); [Galen Malecha](#); [Gerry Hoisington](#); [Jeff Docken](#); [Sara Folsted](#); [Jesse Thomas](#); [Dennis Luebbe](#); [Julie Runkel](#); [Trent McCorkell](#); [Samantha Schwartz](#); [Joshua Schoen](#); [Allan Klug](#); [Rick Gieseke](#); [Deb Purfeerst](#); [Martha Sykes](#); [Angie Nagel](#); [jflaten19@gmail.com](#); [Dennison City Clerk \(cityofdennison@yahoo.com\)](#); [Jenelle Teppen \(jteppen@dundas.us\)](#); [glennofdundas@gmail.com](#); [Todd Hanson](#); [Mayor@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [jkinser@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [Dustin Dienst](#); [Joel Erickson \(jerickson@lonsdalemn.com\)](#); [mayorrud04@gmail.com](#); [Joe Pumper \(jpumper@lonsdalemn.com\)](#); [tlindahl@ci.morristown.mn.us](#); [Bruce Morris \(morristownfire6100@gmail.com\)](#); [Ellen Judd \(ejudd@ci.morristown.mn.us\)](#); [City of Nerstrand \(cityclerknerstrand@gmail.com\)](#); [evavold6@gmail.com](#); [Nate Bonde \(natebonde@gmail.com\)](#); [ben.martig@ci.northfield.mn.us](#); [Tom Nelson \(tom.nelson@nafrs.org\)](#); [paul.haider@ci.northfield.mn.us](#); [clerk@bridgewaterwp.org](#); [caronmarilyn11@gmail.com](#); [Erin Township Clerk \(skaisershot@frontiernet.net\)](#); [Forest Township Clerk \(forestwpclerk@gmail.com\)](#); [Morristown Township Clerk \(morristownmncclerk@gmail.com\)](#); [Northfield Township](#); [Richland Township Clerk \(richland.ricecounty@gmail.com\)](#); [Shieldsville Township Clerk \(suecnovak@gmail.com\)](#); [Walcott Township Clerk \(walcotttownship@gmail.com\)](#); [Warsaw Township Clerk \(warsawtwp@yahoo.com\)](#); [Webster Township Clerk \(webster.township@yahoo.com\)](#); [jpszahn46@gmail.com](#); [Wheatland Township Clerk \(jkduban@lonstel.com\)](#); [Wheeling Township Clerk \(wheelingtwnship@gmail.com\)](#); [Peterson, Michael R \(DPS\)](#); [Steven Pahs \(steven.pahs@riceswcd.org\)](#); [Taylor carlson](#); [charles.phillips@usda.gov](#); [chris.schmidt@usda.gov](#); [Wachholz, Mike P \(DNR\)](#); [david.wilwert@state.mn.us](#); [Todd Piepho \(todd.piepho@state.mn.us\)](#); [chad.hanson@state.mn.us](#); [kruse6@stolaf.edu](#); [Blake Held \(bheld@carleton.edu\)](#); [Terry Wilding \(terry.wilding@msa.state.mn.us\)](#); [annette.parker@southcentral.edu](#); [jregan@wem.k12.mn.us](#); [Matt Hillmann](#); ["jbente@faribault.k12.mn.us"](#); [TCU \(kbabcock@tcu2905.us\)](#); [Northfield Hospital \(yureka@northfieldhospital.org\)](#); [Goodhue Electric](#); ["blunde@dakotaelectric.com"](#); [Mike Otteson \(mikeot@mvec.net\)](#); ["dmeier@swce.coop"](#); [sandi@laurabaker.org](#); [jlarson@threeriverscap.org](#); [tom.kuelbs@usc.salvationarmy.org](#); [sean.farleycowdin@redcross.org](#); [rychner.anika@communityactioncenter.org](#); [Tammy Stewig](#); [earl.merchlewitz@co.goodhue.mn.us](#); [Haas, Scott](#); [Kelly Miller \(kelly.miller@co.dakota.mn.us\)](#); [denise.wright@co.waseca.mn.us](#); [Sailer, Kristen](#); [Matt Maas - Dodge County \(matt.maas@dodgecountymn.gov\)](#)
Cc: [Bonnie K Hundrieser](#)
Subject: 10-9-25 HMP Meeting #2 Invitation
Date: Friday, September 19, 2025 11:42:55 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Greetings,

Your presence is requested at the **2nd Planning Team Meeting** for the update of the **Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)**. You are requested to participate in this vital meeting because you have a position of administrative or departmental responsibility within either the county, a municipal government, or are a key stakeholder related to the planning process. Emergency Managers from neighboring jurisdictions are also encouraged to attend so we may strengthen our shared mitigation efforts. This meeting will be the final planning meeting for the HMP update process.

We will be holding the meeting virtually using Zoom webinar:

Date: Thursday, October 9, 2025

Time: 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Register: [Control+Click here to follow to link to register for the meeting](#)

The purpose of this meeting is to provide an overview of the plan and interactive website, including a review of the updated risk assessment for natural hazards that affect the county. We will also discuss the Mitigation Action Charts that will be specific to Rice County and each city, as well as funding opportunities available under the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs.

Your participation in this meeting and feedback on the draft plan is important to us. The draft Rice County HMP is nearing completion and will be ready for review by planning team members and the public in the coming weeks.

When you register, you will automatically be placed on an RSVP list. If you are not able to attend,

please consider sending another representative in your stead.

Thank you,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

Badge #1156

Rice County Sheriff's Office

Office (507) 332-6119 **Cell** (507) 838-8523

Email joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

Address 50 East View Dr - Faribault, MN 55021

Web www.ricecountymn.gov

Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2025 Planning Team Meeting #2

October 9, 2025



Welcome & Introductions

U-Spatial@UMD Project Leads



Stacey Stark
Project Manager
U-Spatial@UMD



Bonnie Hundrieser
HMP Planning Specialist
Hundrieser Consulting LLC

Rice County Project Lead

- Joseph Johnson, Rice County Emergency Management Director



Please type your name and jurisdiction in the CHAT – so others know who is here

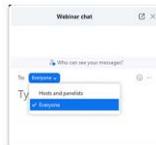
PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Zoom Logistics

PLEASE REMAIN MUTED AND VIDEO OFF SO EVERYONE CAN HAVE THE BEST EXPERIENCE.

USE CHAT:

- Send a message to everyone
- Send a message to individuals or
- Send a message to host to ask for help or ask a question that isn't for the whole group. The host is Stacey Stark



ASK TO SPEAK:



PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Meeting Purpose & Agenda



This meeting formally convenes the **Rice County HMP Planning Team** for a presentation on the draft plan and discussion of key items prior to public review and submission of the plan to HSEM and FEMA.

Agenda

- Recap of Key HMP Points
- Preview of Deliverables
- Review of Risk Assessment & Vulnerability Analysis in Website
- Overview of FEMA HMA Funding and Mitigation Action Charts
- Review & Feedback
- Next Steps

PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Overview of Plan Update

Rice County is updating its **Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)** to fulfill a state & federal requirement. The plan must be updated every 5 years. The last plan was adopted in 2019.

The purpose of the plan is to identify & assess natural hazards that pose risk to the county and its jurisdictions and **develop long-term strategies and mitigation actions** that will help to reduce or eliminate the impact of future hazard or disaster events.



Hazard Mitigation is any action taken to reduce or eliminate long term risk to people and property from natural disasters.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Who the Plan Covers

This is a **multi-jurisdictional plan** that covers Rice County, including all cities and townships within the county.

The plan also takes into consideration the needs and concerns of other stakeholders such as schools, watershed districts, and agencies or organizations involved in mitigation or services to vulnerable populations within the county.



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Stakeholder Involvement



Planning Team

- County and local government, neighboring jurisdictions, and related agencies or organizations.
- Participation in planning team meetings, public outreach, local mitigation survey, provision of spatial or other data, and review of draft plan.

The Public

- Opportunity to learn about the plan and provide feedback on local-level concerns, mitigation ideas, and review of draft plan.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

PDF document:

- All FEMA required elements
- Limited figures & images
- Integrated links to website
- Local mitigation surveys
- Plans & programs in place
- Past mitigation action review
- Planning team meetings
- Outreach & engagement documentation

Deliverables



Website companion:

- Links to PDF components
- **Interactive maps** and context
- Critical infrastructure and assets
- Simple, concise explanations
- Public input form on site



- Risk and vulnerability of each hazard
- Mitigation actions!

Both formats

PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Prioritization of Hazards for Rice County

NATURAL HAZARDS

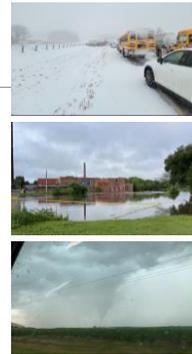
- Probability and Severity of natural hazard events (risk)
- Observed increase or decrease in risk since last plan
- Jurisdictional variations in risk (i.e., local vulnerabilities, changes in development)

Natural Hazards	Current Priority
Flooding	High
Winter Storms	High
Tornadoes	High
Windstorms	Moderate
Hailstorms	Moderate
Lightning	Moderate
Extreme Cold	Moderate
Extreme Heat	Moderate
Drought	Moderate
Dam Failure	Moderate
Wildfire	Low
Landslides	Low

PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Hazards Risk Assessment

- Validates the prioritization of hazards
- Provides probability and severity of future events as possible
- Identifies vulnerable populations and structures at risk as possible
- Considers variable geographic vulnerability
- Informs Mitigation Actions in the HMP



PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Website Demo

Under Development
z.umn.edu/RiceHMP

Comments and Questions?

Overview of Mitigation Action Charts



Mitigation Action Charts are the end product of the HMP.

They demonstrate a community's 5-year plan to:

- Reduce future risk to natural hazard events.
- Address local vulnerabilities through targeted activities.
- Utilize local capabilities to implement actions.

★ Eligible FEMA HMA grant activities must be identified in the plan of action.

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Rice County				Mitigation Action Chart			
#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
21	Severe Summer Storms	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Address the need for the construction of storm shelters or tornado safe rooms in areas where residents or visitors are vulnerable to high wind events, such as mobile home parks and campgrounds.	Existing High 2008-2031	RCEM, RC Parks & Facilities in coordination with local jurisdictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McCullough Park and Campground • Work with all colleges and public schools to assess need & potential for new construction or retrofit • Rice County Public Schools • Rice County Campgrounds • Mobile Home Parks Grant funding may be available for tornado safe rooms from FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant program funding, based on application approval. Rice County and all cities will work as needed with their appropriate utility providers as needed to evaluate areas of concern. Potential project areas will be evaluated to see where putting lines underground may be feasible and make sense.	Internal: RC Parks & Facilities funding External: Local Gov'ts, FEMA HMAIF safe room grant
22	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Encourage municipal and rural electric cooperatives to address burying powerlines or strengthening power poles to avoid power outages from high wind events and storms.	Existing High 2008-2031	RCEM, local jurisdictions in coordination with electric utility providers	Rice County and all cities will work as needed with their appropriate utility providers as needed to evaluate areas of concern. Potential project areas will be evaluated to see where putting lines underground may be feasible and make sense.	External: Electric Coops, FEMA HMAIF grant



City of Dennison				Mitigation Action Chart			
#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms / Extreme Temperatures	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure the city is prepared with generator backup power for critical facilities and has the ability to provide sheltering to vulnerable residents.	In Progress High 2008-2031	City PW / City EMA	The City of Dennison is working to designate City Hall as a storm shelter. We are also working to secure funding for a stand alone generator for both City Hall and the Field House.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
6	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Natural Systems Protection	Manage older canopy of trees on cool and 3rd Avenues to reduce potential damage to homes and cars from windstorms.	Existing Moderate 2022-2030	City Staff	Our city still trims dead or dying tree limbs on our older trees located on city property. When we have to take down big trees, we usually hire a tree removing company to do that. We do not aside money every year for tree removal in our budget, but some years there's not significant storm damage.	Internal: City PW Budget
7	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Continue to participate in annual Storm Spotter Training.	Existing High 2022-2030	City Admin/ Mayor	Our mayor is a trained severe weather spotter and continues to participate in annual trainings.	National Weather Service
8	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Maintain the city's stormwater management system and address improvements as needed.	Existing Moderate 2022-2030	City Staff	Our pond system is vulnerable to flooding, which was evident in June of 2024. The city continues to maintain our current system of catch basins (ponds for flood prevention) for the community. During periods of severe drought, the city will establish watering restrictions as per SWCD guidance. We will also work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
9	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2022-2031	City Admin		Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

"Previous Integration of HMP"



In addition to jurisdictional review of local mitigation action charts:

- Participating jurisdictions (county and cities) must provide a description of how the past HMP was integrated into other planning mechanisms.
- If information from the prior HMP was **not** integrated, this just be stated (and if possible, why).

What are "Planning Mechanisms"?

- Plans, Policies, Ordinances
- Public Education & Outreach
- Implementation of projects (i.e., warning sirens, flood mitigation, installation of generators)
- Other EM related programs or projects (i.e., shelter planning)
- County and partner coordination



FEMA Mitigation Grant Funding



Example Section 404 activities:

Section 406

Available **after** a disaster occurs. Focuses on mitigation measures for facilities that have actually been damaged in a particular disaster.

Section 404

Requires an approved & adopted HMP. Funds mitigation projects for both damaged and non-damaged facilities. Several different grant programs.

- Property Acquisition
- Tornado Safe Rooms
- Bury Overhead Powerlines
- Wildfire Mitigation
- Soil Stabilization
- Flood Risk Reduction
- Green Infrastructure
- Other projects difficult to conduct a standard BCA (i.e., tornado warning sirens, generators for critical facilities)

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Strategy #1 - Local Planning & Regulations



Rice County Examples:

- Enforcement of ordinances that reduce impacts of high rain events (Floodplain, Shoreland)
- Participation in regional watershed planning with SWCD and area WD's (1W1P).
- Establishing of watering restrictions during periods of extreme drought.
- Enforcement of state or local regulations for new development.



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Strategy #2 - Structure & Infrastructure Projects

Rice County Examples:

- Installation of new outdoor warning sirens
- Construction of tornado safe rooms
- Burying powerlines to reduce power failure
- Conducting property buyouts for flooding (City of Morristown – homes along the Cannon River)
- Stormwater management improvements (culvert replacements), Road & Bridge projects
- Woolen Mill Dam stabilization project (City of Faribault)



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Strategy #3 - Natural Systems Protection

Rice County Examples:

- Conduct vegetation management along roads to reduce the risk of downed trees and branches resulting from heavy snow, ice, or high winds.
- Other examples:
 - Planting Living Snow Fences to reduce snow drifting
 - Installing Rain Gardens to reduce impacts of high rain events



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Strategy #4 - Education & Awareness Programs



Rice County Examples:

- Promoting sign-up for the county's emergency notification system.
- Encouraging residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, extreme temperatures, wildfire risk, and extended power outages.
- Sharing information across platforms – county and city websites & social media, community bulletin boards, local newspapers, public meetings, or other in-person events.



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Strategy #5 - Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support

Rice County Examples:

- Obtaining generators for backup power
- Update of county EOP
- Plan for temporary warming/cooling facilities
- Planning assistance to schools and LTC Facilities for vulnerable populations
- Testing of outdoor warning sirens.
- Participation in regional EM planning, training, and exercising



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Comments and Questions?



October, 2025

Following Planning Team Mtg. #2

Review of Draft Plan and Public Review & Comment Period

- Completion of City MAC reviews + description of "Previous Integration of Past HMP"
- County review of draft plan
- Public review & comment period (News Release #2) – documentation of local postings



PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER



Nov-Dec, 2025

Draft Plan Submission to HSEM & FEMA, Plan Approval, and Collection of Adopting Resolutions

- > Draft plan will be submitted first to HSEM and then to FEMA for approval for meeting all Federal requirements.
- > Typically requires 1-2 months.
- > **FEMA "APA" letter**
- > EM coordination of adopting resolutions and submission to HSEM.
- > **Final FEMA approval letter**

PRESENTER: BONNIE HUNDRIESER

Questions?

What questions do you have for U-Spatial@UMD about the draft HMP or next steps ?

PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Contact Information

Stacey Stark, MS, GISP

U-Spatial@UMD

slstark@d.umn.edu

218-726-7438

U-SPATIAL
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Driven to Discover

Bonnie Hundrieser, HM Planner

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**HUNDRIESER
CONSULTING LLC**

PRESENTER: STACEY STARK

Appendix G – Public Outreach & Engagement Documentation

Rice County HMP News Release #1 Record of Public Input & Incorporation

Overview: On September 4, 2024 Rice County Emergency Management put out a news release titled “**Public Input Wanted as Rice County Updates Hazard Mitigation Plan**” to announce the start of the county’s Hazard Mitigation Plan. The news release provided information on the purpose and content of the plan, who the plan covers, stakeholders involved in the plan update and examples of hazard mitigation activities. Rice County used the news release to gather feedback from residents and businesses from across the county to incorporate into the plan, inviting feedback to the following:

- **What are the natural hazards you feel pose the greatest risk to your community?**
- **Are there specific populations or assets in your community that you feel are more vulnerable to future storm events?**
- **What concerns do you have, and what sorts of actions do you feel would help to reduce damages of future hazard events in your community or the county as a whole?**

The public was strongly encouraged contact Rice County Emergency Management to submit comments, concerns, or questions regarding natural disasters and potential mitigation actions to be included into the plan update process. The public was also able to post comments electronically on county or city Facebook sites where the news release was posted.

Distribution: The news release was sent via email to the county’s HMP Jurisdictional Contact List, which includes the names, titles, phone numbers, and email addresses of key stakeholders to be engaged in the HMP update, including county, city, and township contacts; other related agency and organizational stakeholder contacts, and neighboring jurisdiction contacts. (A copy of the Jurisdictional Contact List can be found in Appendix F). The news release was additionally sent to local media contacts with a request to carry the news release.

Postings: Attached is documentation of the news release postings by Rice County, participating jurisdictions, local media, and other stakeholders. Cities and townships were encouraged to help share the news release locally by posting it on their websites, social media, or community bulletin boards.

Public Input & Incorporation:

Following is a record of public responses to the news release and how their input will be incorporated into the plan update, and if not relevant to be addressed, why.

9/23/24 Email to Rice County EMD

Hello Joe,

I saw the call for public input on the hazard mitigation plan update in the September 11 issue of Northfield News. There's a lot to consider in the face of increasing extreme weather events, of course.

The one that strikes me as most threatening in an emergency sense is the flood risk. We are very likely to have "1000 year flood" events in the county over the next two decades, and it makes sense to me to expect that will happen in one or more of the major towns; maybe at the same time. It might not happen- but it also might happen more than once.

I've already brought this up in the Northfield strategic plan update process. I think as far as the sheriff's office and emergency responders on the county-wide scale are concerned, this brings up questions like:

** What bridges will become unusable, and what happens when the bridges are gone/ how to prepare for that.*

** What impacts may occur to accessibility to emergency shelter/housing/food/water when rivers cannot be crossed.*

And of course a slew of others as well; personally I've had property stolen in unusual ways during a major flood event, too (August 2007 in Fillmore County). But that's less of a concern to me than basic shelter.

Thank you and best wishes,

Brandon Rutter-Daywater

EM Response

Hello Brandon,

Thank you for your time to respond to the news release about the Rice County hazard mitigation plan update. The plan will include an updated look at the hazard of flooding in the county, as well as vulnerable infrastructure and mitigation actions to reduce risk. Your input is appreciated.

Thank you,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

Badge #1156

Rice County Sheriff's Office

Office (507) 332-6119 **Cell** (507) 838-8523

Email joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

Address 118 3rd Street NW - Faribault, MN 55021

Web www.ricecountymn.gov

9/24/24 Email from Larry Alderks, Bridgewater Township

Question:

When will public input be created? What month, day and times are you looking at?
How are you wanting public input to be provided?

One thing I can think of is Power. If the storms take out power that creates additional issues. Is there a way to create or provide power to homes, complexes, farms to reduce damage/

Larry Alderks
Bridgewater Township

EM Response

Hello Larry,

Thank you for your time to respond to the news release regarding the Rice County hazard mitigation plan update.

The public input period is ongoing and we will continue to take comments from residents. Regarding power outages: Power failure can result from downed power lines due to a range of storm events (heavy snow, ice storms, windstorms, etc). The plan will be looking at those hazards and developing mitigation actions for reducing risk for power outages. One recommendation will be for the municipal and rural electric cooperatives to work to convert overhead powerlines to underground where its feasible. Another mitigation action will be encouraging homeowners and other facilities to obtain backup generators for the events of extended power outages.

Your email is appreciated with your questions and concerns, which we will record for the public input.

Thank you,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

Badge #1156

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From: [Joseph Johnson](#)
To: [Joseph Johnson](#); [Jon Bolster](#); [Jim Purfeerst](#); [Galen Malecha](#); [Gerry Hoisington](#); [Steve Underdahl](#); [Jeff Docken](#); [Sara Folsted](#); [Jesse Thomas](#); [Dennis Luebbe](#); [Julie Runkel](#); [Trent McCorkell](#); [Samantha Schwartz](#); [Joshua Schoen](#); [Allan Klug](#); [Rick Gieseke](#); [Deb Purfeerst](#); [Martha Williams](#); [Angie Nagel](#); ["jflaten19@gmail.com"](#); ["cityofdennison@yahoo.com"](#); ["jteppen@dundas.us"](#); ["glennofdundas@gmail.com"](#); [Todd Hanson](#); ["Mayor@ci.faribault.mn.us"](#); ["jkinser@ci.faribault.mn.us"](#); ["ddienst@ci.faribault.mn.us"](#); ["jerckson@lonsdalemn.com"](#); ["mayorrud04@gmail.com"](#); ["jpumper@lonsdalemn.com"](#); ["tlindahl@ci.morristown.mn.us"](#); ["morristownfire6100@gmail.com"](#); ["ejudd@ci.morristown.mn.us"](#); ["cityclerknerstrand@gmail.com"](#); ["evavold6@gmail.com"](#); ["natebonde@gmail.com"](#); ["ben.martig@ci.northfield.mn.us"](#); ["tom.nelson@nafrs.org"](#); ["paul.haider@ci.northfield.mn.us"](#); ["clerk@bridgewaterwp.org"](#); ["caronmarilyn11@gmail.com"](#); ["skaisershot@frontiernet.net"](#); ["foresttwpclerk@gmail.com"](#); ["morristownmnclerk@gmail.com"](#); ["clerk@northfieldtwp.org"](#); ["richland.ricecounty@gmail.com"](#); ["suecnovak@gmail.com"](#); ["walcottownship@gmail.com"](#); ["warsawtwp@yahoo.com"](#); ["webster.township@yahoo.com"](#); ["jpzahn46@gmail.com"](#); ["jdkuban@lonstel.com"](#); ["wheelingtowship@gmail.com"](#); ["Steven.Pahs@riceswcd.org"](#); ["taylor.carlson@usda.gov"](#); ["charles.phillips@usda.gov"](#); ["chris.schmidt@usda.gov"](#); ["michael.wachholz@state.mn.us"](#); ["david.wilwert@state.mn.us"](#); ["michael.r.peterson@state.mn.us"](#); ["todd.piepho@state.mn.us"](#); ["chad.hanson@state.mn.us"](#); ["kruse6@stolaf.edu"](#); ["bheld@carleton.edu"](#); ["terry.wilding@msa.state.mn.us"](#); ["annette.parker@southcentral.edu"](#); ["jregan@wem.k12.mn.us"](#); ["mhillmann@northfieldschools.org"](#); ["jbente@faribault.k12.mn.us"](#); ["kbabcock@tcu2905.us"](#); ["yureka@northfieldhospital.org"](#); ["kh@gccea.com"](#); ["blunde@dakotaelectric.com"](#); ["mikeot@mvec.net"](#); ["dmeier@swce.coop"](#); ["sandi@aurabaker.org"](#); ["jarson@threeriverscap.org"](#); ["tom.kuelbs@usc.salvationarmy.org"](#); ["eli.szydlo@redcross.org"](#); ["rychner.anika@communityactioncenter.org"](#); ["tstewig@co.le-sueur.mn.us"](#); ["earl.merchlewitz@co.goodhue.mn.us"](#); ["shaas@co.scott.mn.us"](#); ["kelly.miller@co.dakota.mn.us"](#); ["denise.wright@co.waseca.mn.us"](#); ["kristen.sailer@steelecountymn.gov"](#); ["matt.maas@dodgecountymn.gov"](#)
Cc: ["Bonnie K Hundrieser"](#); [Suzy Rook](#)
Subject: Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update - News Release
Date: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 3:15:25 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Rice County HMP release 1.pdf](#)
[Rice County HMP release 1.docx](#)

Greetings,

Rice County Emergency Management is commencing work on the update of the Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). Attached is a news release for your information.

Your assistance is requested to post this news release to help notify the public about the plan update and to have an opportunity to provide feedback. If you have a website and/or Facebook page we encourage you to post the news release electronically to those places. You may also post a hardcopy of the news release in locations that are common to the public, such as City Hall. We welcome as many of ways of posting that you can cover. As part of the plan update, we must document the public outreach that was conducted.

Please send me an email letting me know when and where you posted the news release. If you have a city website or social media such as Facebook, please post to those locations. You are also encouraged to post printed hardcopies in areas such as at City Hall, the Post Office, a local Community Center or Senior Center, etc. Outreach to the public should be done in as many ways as you can to reach a wide audience.

All city governments within the county are requested to participate in order to meet FEMA requirements. Townships, businesses, and other agencies or organizations are also strongly encouraged to participate.

If you receive any return public comments, please notify me so we may document this and incorporate this feedback into the plan update.

The timely return of your posting documentation within the **next 7 days** is appreciated.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

Badge #1156

Rice County Sheriff's Office

Office (507) 332-6119 **Cell** (507) 838-8523

Email joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

Address 118 3rd Street NW - Faribault, MN 55021

Web www.ricecountymn.gov

The content of this e-mail (including any attachments) is strictly confidential. If you are not, or believe you may not be, the intended recipient, please advise the sender immediately by return e-mail, delete this e-mail and destroy any copies.

From: [Joseph Johnson](#)
To: [Suzy Rook](#)
Cc: "[Bonnie K Hundrieser](#)"
Subject: Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan News Release
Date: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 2:59:58 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Rice County HMP release 1.pdf](#)
[Rice County HMP release 1.docx](#)

Suzy:

Can you please send the attached news release to local media and advise who it was sent to? This is part of a Federal requirement during the Hazard Mitigation Plan update process. I will be emailing other local governments, so please send to only local media.

Thanks!



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

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From: [Joseph Johnson](#)
To: "The Messengers"
Cc: "Bonnie K Hundrieser"
Subject: RCSO Press Release
Date: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 3:51:41 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Rice County HMP release 1.docx](#)
[Rice County HMP release 1.pdf](#)

Greetings:

Can you please share the attached in the next issue of the Dennison/Nerstrand Mainstreet messenger?

Thanks,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

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Rice County Sheriff's Office

Jesse J. Thomas, Sheriff
Joe Yetzer, Chief Deputy

118 Third Street NW, Faribault, MN 55021
507-334-4391 • Fax 507-334-0268

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 4th, 2024

Public Input Wanted as Rice County Updates Hazard Mitigation Plan

Rice County residents, community leaders, business owners, area agencies and organizations now have an opportunity to share how severe weather events impact their property and lives. There is also an opportunity to share their ideas on how to reduce local impacts in the future.

The Rice County Sheriff's Office - Emergency Management is working with U-Spatial at the University of Minnesota Duluth to update the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). The plan assesses the natural hazards that pose risk to the county, such as tornadoes, straight line winds, ice storms, blizzards, wildfire, flooding, and extreme temperatures and identifies ways to minimize the damage of future events. As the county works to update the plan, it wants to hear from the public.

The Rice County HMP is a multi-jurisdictional plan that covers Rice County, including all cities and townships within the county. The Rice County HMP also incorporates the concerns and needs of school districts, watershed districts, and other related agencies, organizations, or businesses participating in the planning process. The plan will be updated by a planning team made up of representatives from county departments, local municipalities, and other key stakeholders. When completed, the plan will be submitted to the Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for approval.

“Hazard mitigation planning is a central part of our emergency management program,” said Joseph Johnson, Rice County Director of Emergency Management. “Understanding the natural hazards that can cause serious impact to our communities and taking action to reduce or eliminate the impact of future disasters makes us more resilient. Hazard mitigation helps us to break the cycle of damage and repair caused by things like flooding, ice storms, and severe wind events that can damage property, stress economies, and threaten life safety in our county.”

Examples of hazard mitigation include:

- Conducting public outreach on severe weather awareness and preparedness
- Improving stormwater management systems to better handle high-rain events
- Removing existing buildings from flood or erosion prone hazard areas
- Increasing defensible space around homes in high-risk wildfire areas

- Constructing tornado safe rooms in vulnerable areas such as mobile home parks
- Burying overhead powerlines that may fail due to heavy snow, ice, or windstorms

Some mitigation activities may be eligible for future FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant funding.

Public input is an essential part of the plan update. As part of the planning process, Rice County is seeking feedback from residents and businesses to incorporate into the plan. Your input will be recorded and incorporated into the planning process:

- **What are the natural hazards you feel pose the greatest risk to your community?**
- **Are there specific populations or assets in your community that you feel are more vulnerable to future storm events?**
- **What concerns do you have, and what sorts of actions do you feel would help to reduce damages of future hazard events in your community or the county as a whole?**

Your feedback is wanted. Comments, concerns, or questions regarding natural disasters and your ideas for mitigation projects should be submitted to Rice County Sheriff's Office - Emergency Management by phone, email, or by posting a comment via a social media posting of this article.

There will be additional opportunities for public feedback throughout the planning process. A draft of the plan will be made available for public review prior to submission of the plan to the State of Minnesota. Future news releases will be shared with the media to notify the public of these opportunities.

The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) requires counties to update their plan every 5 years to maintain eligibility for FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs.

Contact

Joseph Johnson
Rice County Director of Emergency Management
507-332-6119
joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

Rice County HMP News Release #1 (9-4-24)
Chart Documentation of News Release Postings

Jurisdiction or Agency	Posting Representative (name and title)	Date & Location of News Release Posting
Rice County	Suzy Rook, Communications Manager	Our Media Specialist sent the release to the following on 9/4/2024: Faribault Daily News, KYMN Radio, KDHL Radio, KCHK radio, Montgomery Messenger, New Prague Times, Northfield News, MPR, Star Tribune
Rice County	Dennis Luebbe, Engineer	9/6/2024 Highway Buildings in Faribault, Dundas, Lonsdale, Morristown
Rice County Public Health	Martha Williams, Emergency Preparedness	9/11/2024 Facebook
Rice County Soil & Water	Thresa DeMars, Outreach Coordinator	9/12/24 Website
City of Dennison	Jeff Flaten, Mayor	City Website 9/11/2024
City of Dundas	Wade Murry, Officer	9/6/24 Facebook Page
City of Faribault	Brad Phenow, Communications Manager	City of Faribault Website, City, FD, PD Facebook and X pages. PD and City Instagram. 9/6/2024
City of Morristown	Cassie Eleen, City Clerk	Website, City Hall, Post Office 9/6/2024
City of Nerstrand	Joe Johnson, Fire Chief Frances Boehning, City Clerk	9/5/24 Nerstrand Fire Department FB site 9/5/24 Facebook and city hall entry
Cannon City Township	Marilyn Caron, Clerk	9/6/24 Cannon City Township Hall
Warsaw Township	Deb Degroot, Clerk	9/18/2024 Posted at town hall
Northfield School District	Matt Hillmann, Superintendent	9/11/24 District Family Update email and X, FB,
Faribault Public Schools	Danette Marquardt, communications coordinator	9/13/2024 Facebook and website
Tri-City United Public Schools	Anna Hoy, communications director	9/5/2024 via social media pages
South Central College	Brian Tiegs, Director of HR	9/10/24 Facebook
MN DNR	Mike Wacholz, Forester	9/4/2024 DNR Lake City Office 1801 South Oak St, Lake City, MN
MSA Blind and Deaf	Lance Hall, Community Engagement Director	9/5/2024 Posted on Facebook
Le Surer County	Tammy Stewig, EM	9/10/24 on Facebook
Laura Baker Services	Sandi Gerdes, Ex Director	9/11/2024 social media and website
Northfield Hospital & Clinics	Andy Yurek, Emergency Manager	9/12/24 Facebook

Rice County HMP News Release #2 Record of Public Input & Incorporation

Overview: On November 20, 2025 Rice County Emergency Management put out a news release titled “Public Comment Sought for County’s Hazard Mitigation Plan” to announce the completion of the draft Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan and invitation for public review and comment. The news release informed jurisdictional stakeholders and the public that a copy of the draft plan, interactive website, and comment form for public feedback was available online with a website link. The public review period for the draft plan was open from 11/20/24 – 12/4/24 for a total of 15 days.

Distribution: The news release was sent via email to the county’s HMP Jurisdictional Contact List, which includes the names, titles, phone numbers, and email addresses of key stakeholders to be engaged in the HMP update, including County Contacts, City Contacts, Township Contacts, Other Stakeholder Contacts, and Neighboring Jurisdiction Contacts. The news release was additionally sent to local media contacts such as area newspapers, radio and television channels with a request to carry the news release.

Postings: Attached is documentation of the news release postings by Rice County, participating jurisdictions, and local media. Cities and townships were encouraged to help share the news release locally by posting it on their websites, social media, or community bulletin boards.

Public Input & Incorporation:

Following is a record of public responses to the Rice County news release and how the input will be incorporated into the plan update, and if not relevant to be addressed, why.

Public Input & Incorporation:

Following is a record of public responses to the Blue Earth County news release and how the input will be incorporated into the plan update, and if not relevant to be addressed, why.

Feedback was submitted via the HMP online feedback form as well as via email to Rice County Emergency Management by Sonny Wasilowski:

Mitigation Action Idea: To ensure inclusivity, any communication provided in Spanish and Somali should also be presented using American Sign Language (ASL) for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing communities. This approach guarantees accessibility and allows these groups to fully participate and understand the information shared.

Feedback for Plan: Suggestion for Community Outreach: Include the Faribault Deaf Club in community outreach efforts. This is crucial for addressing accessibility concerns and recognizing the importance of communication through American Sign Language (ASL). Integrating the Deaf community ensures that all residents receive vital hazard mitigation information and can participate fully in preparedness plans.

Incorporation: Mitigation Action #3 in the Rice County Mitigation Action Chart was updated to broaden the whole community approach to outreach. It reads: “Work to improve delivery of information to

vulnerable populations within the county, including those who speak English as a second language, the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing communities.” The comments on implementation & integration include: “To ensure inclusivity, we will also seek ways to expand delivery of emergency information in American Sign Language (ASL) for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing communities. This will fall under our broader Rice County Emergency Management program.”

From: [Joseph Johnson](#)
To: [Joseph Johnson](#); [Jon Bolster](#); [Jim Purfeerst](#); [Galen Malecha](#); [Gerry Hoisington](#); [Steve Underdahl](#); [Sara Folsted](#); [Jesse Thomas](#); [Dennis Luebbe](#); [Julie Runkel](#); [Trent McCorkell](#); [Samantha Schwartz](#); [Joshua Schoen](#); [Allan Klug](#); [Rick Gieseke](#); [Deb Purfeerst](#); [Martha Sykes](#); [Angie Nagel](#); [Dennison Mayor](#); [Dennison City Clerk](#); [Jenelle Teppen](#); [glennofdundas@gmail.com](#); [Todd Hanson](#); [Mayor@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [jkinser@ci.faribault.mn.us](#); [Dustin Dienst](#); [Joel Erickson](#); [tberg@lonsdalemn.com](#); [Joe Pumper](#); [tliindahl@ci.morristown.mn.us](#); [Kyle Green -6101](#); [Ellen Judd](#); [City of Nerstrand](#); [evavold6@gmail.com](#); [Nate Bonde](#); [ben.martig@ci.northfield.mn.us](#); [Dave Bennett](#); [Tom Nelson](#); [paul.haider@ci.northfield.mn.us](#); [lori Noreen](#); [caronmarilyn11@gmail.com](#); [Erin Township Clerk](#); [Forest Township Clerk](#); [Morristown Township Clerk](#); [Northfield Township](#); [Richland Township Clerk](#); [Shieldsville Township Clerk](#); [Walcott Township Clerk](#); [Warsaw Township Clerk](#); [Webster Township Clerk](#); [Wells Township Clerk](#); [jkduban@lonstel.com](#); [Wheeling Township Clerk](#); [Peterson, Michael R \(DPS\)](#); [Steven Pahs](#); [Taylor Carlson](#); [charles.phillips@usda.gov](#); [chris.schmidt@usda.gov](#); [Wachholz, Mike P \(DNR\)](#); [Smith, Alexa \(She/Her/Hers\) \(DNR\)](#); [Todd Piepho](#); [jeffrey.bunch@state.mn.us](#); [Jeff Favreau](#); [Blake Held](#); [Terry Wilding](#); [ritu.raju@southcentral.edu](#); [WEM Schools](#); [Matt Hillmann](#); [Jamie Bente](#); [TCU \(kbabcock@tcu2905.us\)](#); [Northfield Hospital \(yureka@northfieldhospital.org\)](#); [Kelly Hovel](#); [Brandon Lunde](#); [Mike Otteson](#); [Dan Meier](#); [Sandi Gerdes](#); [jlarson@threeriverscap.org](#); [tom.kuelbs@usc.salvationarmy.org](#); [sean.farleycowdin@redcross.org](#); [Anika Rychner](#); [tstewig@co.le-sueur.mn.us](#); [earl.merchlewitz@co.goodhue.mn.us](#); [Haas, Scott](#); [Kelly Miller](#); [denise.wright@co.waseca.mn.us](#); [kristen.sailer@steelecountymn.gov](#); [matt.maas@dodgecountymn.gov](#); [Charlie Peters](#)
Cc: [Bonnie K Hundrieser](#); [Suzy Rook](#)
Subject: Rice County HMP News Release for Public Review Period - Action Needed
Date: Thursday, November 20, 2025 9:10:21 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Rice County HMP release 2.pdf](#)

Greetings,

The public review and comment period is now open for the Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan from Thursday, November 20 to Tuesday, December 4. This public review period is required prior to the plan being sent to FEMA for review. Your assistance is requested in sharing this information with the public. The **cities of Dennison, Dundas, Faribault, Lonsdale, Morristown, Nerstrand, and Northfield** are requested to please post this locally. Townships and other related stakeholders involved in the plan update are also encouraged to share the news release.

Instructions:

- **Please post the attached news release to areas where you share information with the public (i.e., your website, social media, or community bulletin boards)**
- **Please email me to let me know the date and location(s) of where the news release was posted.**

There are website links as well as a QR code in the news release that will take you to the HMP website that includes a PDF of the plan and local mitigation action charts. There is an online feedback form to provide any comments, questions, or other feedback. If you have not already reviewed the plan during the government review period, you are strongly encouraged to do so.

As this is a 15-day review period, please post the release promptly.

Thank you for your assistance. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,



Joseph Johnson

Director of Emergency Management

Badge #1156

Rice County Sheriff's Office

Office (507) 332-6119 **Cell** (507) 838-8523

Email joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

Address 50 East View Dr - Faribault, MN 55021

Web www.ricecountymn.gov



Rice County Sheriff's Office

Jesse J. Thomas, Sheriff
Joe Yetzer, Chief Deputy

118 Third Street NW, Faribault, MN 55021
507-334-4391 • Fax 507-334-0268

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 20, 2025

Public Comment Sought for Rice County's Hazard Mitigation Plan

Rice County has completed an updated draft of its Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) and is now seeking public feedback.

Like all Minnesota counties, Rice County is vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards such as tornadoes, windstorms, severe winter storms, flooding, drought, and extreme temperatures, which can threaten the loss of life and property in the county. Planning for natural disasters minimizes the impact of events that can cause vast economic loss and personal hardship.

All county residents, interested agency or organizational stakeholders are encouraged to review and offer feedback on the draft plan and proposed local mitigation actions. The review and comment period is open for a period of 15 days through December 4, 2025. The public can access the plan using the following links:

[Rice County HMP Website Homepage](#) (feedback form at the bottom of page)

[Rice County Mitigation Action Charts](#) (feedback form at the bottom of page).

The Rice County HMP is a multi-jurisdictional plan that covers Rice County, including all cities and townships within the county. The Rice County HMP also incorporates the concerns and needs of other key stakeholders such as school districts and related agencies, organizations, or businesses participating in the planning process.

Update of the plan has been under direction of Rice County Emergency Management in cooperation with U-Spatial at the University of Minnesota Duluth and representatives from county departments, city and township governments and other participating stakeholders. Together, the planning team worked to identify cost-effective and sustainable actions to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life or property from natural hazards. Examples include infrastructure projects for areas that experience repetitive flooding; construction of safe rooms in areas where residents and visitors are vulnerable to tornadoes and severe storm events; burying powerlines that may fail due to heavy snow, ice, or wind storms; ensuring timely emergency

communication to the public through warning sirens and mass notification systems; and conducting outreach to increase public awareness of severe weather and personal preparedness.

Hazard mitigation planning helps Rice County and other jurisdictions protect their residents. Working with local communities through the process helps identify vulnerabilities and develop strategies to reduce or eliminate the effects of a potential hazard. In addition, increasing public awareness of natural disasters and encouraging personal preparedness helps to create a community that is resilient to disaster, and breaks the cycle of response and recovery. Updating the plan further allows Rice County and its jurisdictions to be eligible to apply for future FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant program funding for projects that help to reduce or eliminate the impacts of future natural hazard events.

Community feedback is vital to the success of the plan. Rice County invites public review and feedback of the draft plan prior to submitting it to the State of Minnesota and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for review.

Comments, concerns, or questions regarding the draft plan or ideas for mitigation projects should be submitted either via the Hazard Mitigation Plan website online public feedback form or by contacting Rice County Emergency Management.

Contact

Joseph Johnson
Rice County Director of Emergency Management
507-332-6119
joseph.johnson@ricecountymn.gov

The following QR code may be used to directly access the Rice County Hazard Mitigation Plan interactive website:



Rice County HMP News Release #2 (11-20-25)
Chart Documentation of News Release Postings

Jurisdiction or Agency	Posting Representative (name and title)	Date & Location of News Release Posting
Rice County	Suzy Rook, Communications Director	11/20/25 Distributed to Cities, Townships, Chambers of commerce, Rice County Department Heads, Distributed to Media: Faribault Daily News, KYMN Radio, DKHL Radio, KCHK radio, Montgomery messenger, New Prague Times, Northfield News, MPR, Star Tribune.
Rice County	Shari Noll, Administrative Coordinator	11/20/25 Public Notice Box at Government Services Building.
City of Dennison	Jeff Flaten, Mayor	Post office, city bulletin board and City Website 11/20/25
City of Dundas	Jenelle Teppen, City Clerk	Dundas City Hall: 11/20/25
City of Faribault	Brad Phenow, Communications Manager	Website and Facebook: 11/21/25
City of Lonsdale	Joel Erickson, City Administrator	Website and City Hall Bulletin Board 11/24/25
City of Morristown	Kyle Green, Fire Chief	Social Media 11/23/25
City of Nerstrand	Joe Johnson, Fire Chief	Social Media 11/20/25
City of Northfield	David Bennett, Engineer	Website & Social Media 12/2/25
Forest Township	Ashley Anderson, Clerk	Township Website 11/25/25

Appendix H – Mitigation Actions by Jurisdiction

City of Dennison

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We post information on our community bulletin board outside of City Hall, the Post Office and city website. Information is also put on Facebook. We work with Rice County Emergency Management to notify citizens about severe weather and awareness. Sogn Valley SkyWarn is also valuable in notifying citizens of severe weather, too.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	Our city is located within both Goodhue and Rice counties. We will work with those emergency managers to help us put information and links on our city website for residents to sign up for these emergency notification systems (CodeRED for Goodhue County and Everbridge for Rice County).	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin	The city of Dennison adopts the MN State Building Code. Building inspection and code enforcement is contracted through Goodhue County.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The city has recently hired an engineering company to help plan for growth and replace our older infrastructure. Part of our needs assessment study done by the engineering company was to help us plan for the future, which includes updating that Comprehensive Plan and zoning maps. The city's last Comprehensive Plan adopted was in 1998.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Dennison

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms / Extreme Temperatures	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure the city is prepared with generator backup power for critical facilities and has the ability to provide sheltering to vulnerable residents.	In Progress High 2026-2031	City PW / City EM	The city of Dennison is working to designate City Hall as a storm shelter. We are also working to secure funding for a stand-alone generator for both City Hall and the Well House.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
6	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Natural Systems Protection	Manage older canopy of trees on 2nd and 3rd Avenues to reduce potential damage to homes and cars from windstorms.	Existing Moderate 2025-2030	City Staff	Our city staff trims dead or dying tree limbs on our older trees located on city property. When we have to take down big trees, we usually hire a tree removing company to do that. We do set aside money every year for tree removal in our budget, but some years there's not significant storm damage.	Internal: City PW Budget
7	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Continue to participate in annual Storm Spotter Training.	Existing High 2025-2030	City Admin/ Mayor	Our mayor is a trained severe weather spotter and continues to participate in annual trainings.	National Weather Service
8	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Maintain the city's stormwater management system and address improvements as needed.	Existing Moderate 2025-2030	City Staff	Our pond system is vulnerable to flooding, which was evident in June of 2024. The city continues to maintain our current system of catch basins/ponds for flood prevention for the community.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
9	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	During periods of severe drought, the city will establish watering restrictions as per MN DNR guidance. We will also work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Dundas

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We work with Rice County Emergency Management on Winter/Spring Weather Awareness. We post relevant items on the city website and our social media. We also have a Citizen's Alert program to get emergency notices from the city out to residents.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We promote Rice County's and Steele County's Everbridge Emergency Notification System on the city website with a link to sign up.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin	The city adopts the MN State Building Code. Building code enforcement is done through the Building Official and Building Inspector. The Fire Code is enforced by the Fire Chief.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	Dundas has a Comprehensive Plan and enforces our floodplain ordinance in order to regulate any development in flood risk areas.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure the city has emergency generator backup power for city services and buildings.	New High 2026-2031	City PW / City EM	The city will continue to evaluate where generator backup power is needed for city facilities or infrastructure. The city would purchase generators as funding is available and approved by City Council.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
6	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Reduce the risk of downed power lines from severe storm events through trimming trees and putting power lines under ground.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	Xcel Energy is our electric provider. Xcel conducts tree management around power lines. The city will encourage Xcel to convert overhead power lines to underground where possible.	External: Xcel Energy

City of Dundas

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
7	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure that the city's outdoor warning sirens are maintained and functioning.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	The city has 2 outdoor warning siren which we test monthly in coordination with the Rice County Sheriff's Office. Warning sirens are maintained on a regular basis.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
8	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of severe windstorms and tornadic weather, to understand warning siren alerts, and to be prepared with personal evacuation or shelter plans.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city will seek to work with Rice County to promote tornado awareness and safety during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness week each April.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
9	Extreme Temperatures Heat/Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Be prepared to provide emergency sheltering to vulnerable residents during periods of extreme heat or cold temperatures.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, City EM	In the event of an extreme temperature event coupled with an extended power outage, the city will work with our fire department and Rice County Emergency Management to address assistance such as evacuation or temporary sheltering for the elderly or other vulnerable residents.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
10	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work to address flood mitigation measures that help the city to handle future high rain events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	Our Public Works department continues to upgrade the city's storm sewer capacity during reconstruction projects.	Internal: PW Dept. Budget
11	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The City of Dundas maintains a watering restriction ordinance that is in effect between May 1 – October 15. During periods of severe drought, the city will work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Faribault

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city shares information with the public by posting information on our city website and social media. We have held personal preparedness trainings for the public along with individualized trainings for schools and businesses. We are a designated Weather Ready Community through the National Weather Service. We will continue to participate in the National Weather Service's – Severe Weather Awareness Weeks and share information with the public.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We promote sign up for the county's Everbridge Emergency Notification System using social media, radio and during training and other outreach events. We are working on ways to improve dissemination of warnings and other message to non-English speaking citizens.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Codes Division, City Planning & Zoning Dept.	The city of Faribault adopts the MN State Building Code. We have a Codes Division within the Fire Department that consists of a Building Official, Building Inspector and two Property Maintenance Inspectors. We also do fire inspections (complaint based or requested). Our Planning and Zoning Dept is in charge of enforcing our zoning ordinances that have been in place for many years.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Faribault

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The City Emergency Manager is in charge of updating our City Multi-Hazard Plan. City EM also meets annually with the 4 mobile home park managers and the school district to ensure that our plan is still current. We have pre-plans of many of our buildings in the city that are available via I-Pad for emergency response. We just updated the city's Comprehensive Plan and have a well-head protection plan in place. We also have a robust storm sewer maintenance and protection plan.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Trim trees near power lines and work with our local utility to convert overhead power lines to underground to reduce the risk of power outages from severe storms.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city Public Works Department works to manage trees within the ROW of city streets. Our utility provider, Steele Waseca Coop Electric maintains vegetation near overhead powerlines. The coop oversees addressing mitigation for any vulnerable power lines. The city will work with the coop as needed on any future power line conversion projects to put overhead power to underground.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: Steele Waseca Coop Electric
6	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure that the city's outdoor warning sirens are maintained and functioning.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	The city has a large system of outdoor warning sirens which we test monthly in coordination with the Rice County Sheriff's Office. Warning sirens are maintained on a regular basis. We will continue to add outdoor warning sirens as the city grows.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Faribault

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
7	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of severe windstorms and tornadic weather, to understand warning siren alerts, and to be prepared with personal evacuation or shelter plans.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We work closely with our schools on fire, evacuation, and severe weather drills. We continue to participate in the NWS Severe Weather Awareness Week held each April.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
8	Severe Summer Storms	Local Planning & Regulations / Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work with the city's mobile home park (MHP) to address evacuation and shelter planning. Plan for construction of a new tornado shelter facilities as needed for any MHP locations.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	Our city Emergency Manager continues to work with the local mobile home managers to ensure that their residents know the sheltering plan for their park. The sheltering plans for the 4 mobile home parks require that people drive to the shelter location. The city may seek to work with the MHP owners to assess and address construction of onsite tornado safe room facilities. The city would seek to apply for FEMA HMGP grant funding if we advanced any such projects.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: FEMA HMGP safe room grant funding
9	Extreme Temperatures Heat/Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Be prepared to provide emergency sheltering to vulnerable residents during periods of extreme heat or cold temperatures.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, City EM	We meet annually with our MN National Guard partners as their facility is our mass care shelter. We will continue to educate people about extreme heat and cold and ensure that our facilities are prepared to serve as heating or cooling shelters if needed.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: MN National Guard

City of Faribault

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
10	Extreme Cold	Education & Awareness Programs	Conduct special outreach in winter to raise awareness of the dangers of extreme cold and safety measures to protect life safety and avoid frozen water lines.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	We continue to use our city website, social media, local media, and in-person trainings to encourage residents to be prepared for periods of extreme cold and potential power outages. Use our city website to notify residents to avoid freezing pipes during sub-zero weather. Our city EM continues to work with the local nursing home to be prepared with emergency plans for extended power outages.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
11	Extreme Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Work to establish a warming center facility and program for those who are homeless and exposed to extreme cold.	New High 2026-2031	City EM in coord with RCEM	This effort will fall under the work of our city Emergency Manager in coordination with Rice County Emergency Management and other partner agencies and community partners.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: Outside funding TBD
12	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work to address flood mitigation measures that help the city to handle future high rain events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City PW Dept, City Engineer	Our public works department maintains the city's storm sewer maintenance and protection plan. We have identified most of our flooding vulnerabilities but lift stations are still one of our vulnerabilities that we have not mitigated. This is a current effort of our Public Works Department. The city works to implement new storm sewer upgrades as construction projects occur. The city will seek outside grant funding as needed; potential sources may include MN PFA, MPCA or USDA grant funds.	Internal: PW Dept. Budget External: MN PFA, MPCA, USDA potential funding

City of Faribault

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
13	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce the city's sump pump ordinance to minimize impacts to the city's stormwater system.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Planning & Zoning Dept.	This ordinance is enforced by our Planning & Zoning Dept. in coordination with our Public Works team, who monitor and manage the city's stormwater system.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
14	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The City of Faribault maintains a watering restriction ordinance that is in effect between May 1 – September 30. During periods of severe drought, the city will work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
15	Dam Failure	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Assess and implement mitigation measures for the Woolen Mills to stabilize the area and prevent additional erosion.	New High 2026-2031	City Admin, City Public Works, City EM	In June, 2024 the Woolen Mill Dam suffered erosion damage from a high rain flooding event. The dam is located on the Cannon River in the City of Faribault. Assessment of the dam revealed the need to stabilize the area and to prevent additional erosion. Should the dam ever fail, roads and the city's wastewater treatment plant would be affected. We are actively researching mitigation projects. Updating, upgrading or even removal and replacement with another type of structure are all options being seriously looked at.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: MN DNR FHM grant program, FEMA HMGP

City of Lonsdale

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city shares information with the public by posting information on our city website and social media. We work closely with Sky Warn and Rice County Emergency Management and use social media on severe weather alerts and awareness.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We provide a link to sign up for the Rice County Everbridge system on the City of Lonsdale Police Department webpage. We have also implemented a Citizens Alert Program.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin	The city has adopted the MN State Building Code. Building codes are enforced through the city's Building Inspector.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The city has a comprehensive plan and utilizes other stakeholders to assist with future growth. The City also has regulations in place to address flooding. The city is not located in a flood plain. Storm sewer/ponding needs to account for discharge less than or equal to pre-development.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Trim trees near power lines and work with our local utility to convert overhead power lines to underground to reduce the risk of power outages from severe storms.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	Our electric providers are Xcel Energy, Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative (MVEC), and Steele Waseca Cooperative Electric. Our utility providers conduct tree management around power lines and convert power lines underground where possible.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: Xcel, MVEC, Steele Waseca Coop. Electric

City of Lonsdale

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
6	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure that the city's outdoor warning sirens are maintained and functioning.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM, PW Dept.	The city has 3 outdoor warning sirens which we test monthly in coordination with the Rice County Sheriff's Office. Warning sirens are maintained on a regular basis.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
7	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of severe windstorms and tornadic weather, to understand warning siren alerts, and to be prepared with personal evacuation or shelter plans.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city will work with Rice County to promote tornado awareness and safety during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness week each April. We can use our city website and social media to help share information with the public.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
8	Severe Summer Storms	Local Planning & Regulations / Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Assess and address the need for storm shelters accessible to vulnerable areas. Apply for FEMA grant funding for tornado safe rooms if necessary.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	Within the city of Lonsdale there are multi and single-level apartment complexes that lack proper shelter and would have to travel to get to appropriate shelter during high wind or tornado events. We will work to evaluate potential emergency evacuation and sheltering options that are off site of these locations. If the city were to pursue construction of a tornado safe room, we would seek to apply for potential FEMA HMGP grant funding.	External: FEMA HMGP grant funding
9	Extreme Temperatures Heat/Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Be prepared to provide emergency sheltering to vulnerable residents during periods of extreme heat or cold temperatures.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, City EM	In the event of an extreme temperature event coupled with an extended power outage, the city will work with our fire department and Rice County Emergency Management to address assistance such as evacuation or temporary sheltering for the elderly or other vulnerable residents.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Lonsdale

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
10	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work to address flood mitigation measures that help the city to handle future high rain events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city continues to upgrade the city's storm sewer capacity during reconstruction projects. Over the past 10 years, the city has also identified and addressed flooding issues by increasing the storm sewer capacity during street construction projects.	Internal: City CIP designated funding
11	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin / PW Dept.	During periods of severe drought, the city will establish watering restrictions as per city ordinance. We will also work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Morristown

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city shares information with the public by posting information on our city website and Facebook. We also participate in Skywarn training to have trained weather spotters in the community. We also have a city alerts system that residents can sign up for.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We will use our city website "Community" page to provide a link to the Rice County website to sign up for the Everbridge emergency notification system.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, Planning & Zoning	The city has Planning and Zoning Ordinances that we enforce. This includes a Floodplain Ordinance which regulates new development in mapped flood risk areas.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	Our city code enforces floodplain requirements.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Reduce the risk of power outages and downed power lines resulting from severe storm events such as thunderstorms, windstorms, heavy snow, and ice storms.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city will work with our electric provider Xcel Energy to covert overhead power lines to underground where possible. We will also seek to improve the city's substation to lessen power outages.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: Xcel Energy
6	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure that the city's outdoor warning sirens are maintained and functioning.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	The city has 1 outdoor warning siren which we test monthly in coordination with the Rice County Sheriff's Office. The siren is maintained on a regular basis.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Morristown

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
7	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of severe windstorms and tornadic weather, to understand warning siren alerts, and to be prepared with personal evacuation or shelter plans.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city will seek to work with Rice County to promote tornado awareness and safety during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness week each April. The city includes information in the New Resident Information Packet on the use of outdoor warning sirens for emergencies and when they are tested.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
8	Severe Summer Storms	Local Planning & Regulations / Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work with the local mobile home park owner to construct a storm shelter or tornado safe room.	New High 2026-2031	City EM	The city will work with the MHP operator to assess the sheltering needs of the mobile home park and evaluate possible construction options. The city would seek to apply for FEMA HMGP grant funding to construct a tornado safe room if this is the preferred solution to pursue.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: FEMA HMGP safe room grant funding
9	Extreme Temperatures Heat/Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Be prepared to provide emergency sheltering to vulnerable residents during periods of extreme heat or cold temperatures.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, City EM	In the event of an extreme temperature event coupled with an extended power outage, the city will work with our fire department and Rice County Emergency Management to address assistance such as evacuation or temporary sheltering for the elderly or other vulnerable residents.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
10	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work to address flood mitigation measures that help the city to handle future high rain events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	As the city undertakes future street projects, we will incorporate further stormwater management improvements as needed. Our last two street projects have included increased the size of our storm pipe accordingly.	Internal: PW Dept. Budget

City of Morristown

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
11	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Conduct property buyouts with willing homeowners along the Cannon River who have been experienced flood damages.	New High 2026-3031	City Admin, City EM	The city will assess potential buyout projects with affected property owners. Properties bought out would be converted to open space to eliminate future flood damages. FEMA HMGP or MN DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation grant program funding are possible sources of external funding to conduct buyouts.	External: MN DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, FEMA HMGP Grant Program
12	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	During periods of severe drought, the city will establish watering restrictions as per MN DNR guidance. We will also work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Nerstrand

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city shares information with the public by posting information on our city website and city and fire department Facebook pages. Our city works with Rice County EM to share information with our community during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness Weeks.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We promote sign up for the county's Everbridge emergency notification system using our city and fire department Facebook pages.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin	The city of Nerstrand adopts the MN State Building Code. Building inspection and code enforcement is contracted through Goodhue County.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The city has reestablished its zoning commission and is discussing a comprehensive planning process.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Obtain a generator for the city's Fire Station, which serves as the designated shelter for our community.	New High 2026-2031	City PW / City EM	The city will work to obtain a generator as funding is available and approved. We may also seek external funding from FEMA HMGP if this would be an eligible mitigation project to apply for.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: FEMA HMGP
6	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Work with Xcel Energy to reduce the risk of power failure to overhead power lines and extended power outages.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city will work with our electric provider, Xcel Energy, to move overhead power lines to underground if possible.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: Xcel Energy

City of Nerstrand

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
7	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Ensure that the city's outdoor warning sirens are maintained and functioning.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	The city has 1 outdoor warning siren which we test monthly in coordination with the Rice County Sheriff's Office. The siren is maintained on a regular basis.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
8	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of severe windstorms and tornadic weather, to understand warning siren alerts, and to be prepared with personal evacuation or shelter plans.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city will seek to work with Rice County to promote tornado awareness and safety during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness week each April.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
9	Extreme Temperatures Heat/Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Be prepared to provide emergency sheltering to vulnerable residents during periods of extreme heat or cold temperatures.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, City EM	The city has designated City Hall as our community shelter. In the event of an extreme temperature event coupled with an extended power outage, the city will work to get information out to those in the community who may need to take shelter, such as the elderly or other vulnerable residents.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
10	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations	Enroll in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and establish a floodplain ordinance.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin in coord with MN DNR	The current effective flood risk map for Nerstrand is from 4/6/2022, which includes FEMA Mapped High Risk Areas. The city does not participate in the NFIP, but with City Council approval we will enroll in the NFIP and work with the MN DNR to establish a floodplain ordinance for the city.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget External: MN DNR Floodplain Program
11	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Work to address flood mitigation measures that help the city to handle future high rain events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city's Public Works department continues to maintain and improve our city stormwater system as needed to handle high rain events.	Internal: PW Dept. Budget

City of Nerstrand

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
12	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	During periods of severe drought, the city will establish watering restrictions as per MN DNR guidance. We will also work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
13	Wildfire	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Consider grant funding available to support the fire department with wildfire equipment.	New Moderate 2016-2031	City FD	Our city fire department will work to research and apply for potential external grant sources for new equipment.	External: Community Wildfire Defense Grant

City of Northfield

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
1	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of and prepared for severe weather events, periods of extreme temperatures, and extended power outages.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city shares information with the public by posting information on our website, social media, and local media outlets to discuss severe weather. We also do some in-school education for students. Each spring we work with Rice County Emergency Management to participate in the NWS Severe Weather awareness week.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
2	All-Hazards	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to sign up for the county's emergency notification system to receive alerts on severe weather events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	We promote sign up for Everbridge on our city website and social media (Facebook, Instagram).	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
3	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Enforce city regulations that help to reduce the risk of storm damages to new development.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin	The city of Northfield adopts the MN State Building Code. Our city building inspections dept. enforces the building codes.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
4	All-Hazards	Local Planning & Regulations	Incorporate mitigation strategies across the city's long-term plans and policies for future growth and new development.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The city has floodplain overlay district along with storm water regulations requiring building to elevated above flood elevations. The city enforces our floodplain ordinance, effective 4/20/2013. In addition, the city of Northfield adopted a climate action plan in 2019. There are a variety of initiatives in the plan that assist in reducing the city's vulnerability against severe weather.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
5	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Work with Xcel Energy to reduce the risk of power failure to overhead power lines and extended power outages.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city will work with our electric provider, Xcel Energy, to move overhead power lines to underground if possible.	Internal: City PW Budget External: Xcel Energy

City of Northfield

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
6	Severe Winter & Summer Storms	Natural Systems Protection	Conduct tree management within the city to reduce the risk of downed trees and branches resulting from severe storms.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The city is responsible for the routine pruning, removal, and replacement of trees within the city's boulevard areas. Dead, diseased, or hazardous boulevard trees are removed. The city is working to assess and address our local forestry efforts, specifically how the Emerald Ash Borer/other pest infestation may impact our urban forest.	Internal: City PW Budget
7	Severe Summer Storms	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Maintain and improve the city's outdoor warning siren system.	Existing High 2026-2031	City EM	The city has 11 outdoor warning sirens which we test monthly in coordination with the Rice County Sheriff's Office. The city has been working to replace one tornado siren each year to ensure that all are up to date. Warning sirens are maintained on a regular basis.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
8	Severe Summer Storms	Education & Awareness Programs	Encourage residents to be aware of severe windstorms and tornadic weather, to understand warning siren alerts, and to be prepared with personal evacuation or shelter plans.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin / City EM	The city works with Rice County Emergency Management to promote tornado awareness and safety during the NWS Severe Weather Awareness week each April.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
9	Extreme Temperatures Heat/Cold	Mitigation Preparedness & Response Support	Be prepared to provide emergency sheltering to vulnerable residents during periods of extreme heat or cold temperatures.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Admin, City EM	In the event of an extreme temperature event coupled with an extended power outage, the city will work with our fire department and Rice County Emergency Management to address assistance such as evacuation or temporary sheltering for the elderly or other vulnerable residents.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget

City of Northfield

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
10	Flooding	Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Implement stormwater management improvements that help the city to handle future high rain events.	Existing High 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept.	The City of Northfield Public Works Dept. takes an active role in managing stormwater run-off in flood prevention. The department has completed a City-Wide Flood Study and a specific downtown flood study that the city will be seeking grants for implementation. FEMA grant funding may be one source that the city will evaluate and apply for.	Internal: PW Dept. Budget External: MN PFA, FEMA HMGP, MN DNR FHM grant program
11	Flooding	Local Planning & Regulations/ Structure & Infrastructure Projects	Implement mitigation projects identified in the City of Northfield Downtown Flood Improvement Study.	In-Progress High 2026-2031	City Public Works in coord with FEMA	<p>The City of Northfield is completing a Downtown Flood Improvement Study. The city is guided by its strategic plan to provide a community that is resilient and sustainable as we plan and prepare for climate change impacts.</p> <p>The City of Northfield is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Advanced Assistance.</p> <p>The City has identified flood prone properties adjacent to the Cannon River that have been impacted most recently from the flooding in 2010 and 2016. The goal of the study is to identify projects and mitigation measure to alleviate damage to property from future flooding events.</p>	<p>Internal: CIP Project Funding</p> <p>External: FEMA Advanced Assistance, FEMA HMGP, MN DNR Flood Hazard Mitigation Program, MN PFA funding, MPCA funding</p>

City of Northfield

Mitigation Action Chart

#	Hazard	Mitigation Strategy	Mitigation Action	Status Priority Timeframe	Responsibility	Comments on Implementation & Integration	Possible Funding
12	Flooding	Education & Awareness Programs	Provide education and outreach to homeowners on ways to reduce risk to private property from high rain events.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Public Works Dept. (Home & Yard)	The city provides incentive programs toward the purchase of rain barrels and building rain gardens for homeowners to reduce the impacts of stormwater and localized flooding.	Internal: City Rebate Program
13	Drought	Local Planning & Regulations / Education & Awareness Programs	During periods of drought establish water use restrictions and conduct public outreach on water conservation measures.	New Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	During periods of severe drought, the city will establish watering restrictions as per MN DNR guidance. We will also work to promote awareness to residents of the restrictions and water conservation measures.	Internal: City Gen. Operating Budget
14	Drought	Education & Awareness Programs	Share drought condition information with the public.	Existing Moderate 2026-2031	City Admin	The city provides information on our city website from the U.S. Drought Monitor, and river gauge data for the Cannon River Flow Welch, MN and Straight River Flow at Faribault, MN.	External: USDA, USGS

Appendix I – Plan Maintenance & Monitoring Worksheets

During the five-year plan period, the Emergency Management Director (EMD) will require all relevant departments and jurisdictions to report on the status of their mitigation actions. This information will be used to track progress for the next plan update. Participating jurisdictions will use these worksheets to report on the mitigation activities listed in Appendix H.

Mitigation Action Tracking	
Name of Jurisdiction	
Reporting Period	
Describe the action or project.	
Who is responsible for the action?	
Project status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In progress, anticipated completion date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not started <input type="checkbox"/> Canceled
Progress Report	
Has there been any progress with this project so far?	
Are there any obstacles or challenges with this action so far?	
What steps do you need to take to complete this project?	
Other comments:	

Hazard Mitigation Plan Maintenance Schedule			
Plan Maintenance Step	When	How	Who
Monitoring	Twice per year.	Get status updates on jurisdictional mitigation actions, compile progress reports and identify any opportunities for improvement.	Emergency Management Director
Evaluating	Once a year or after a disaster event.	Use a standard form to review how the plan has been carried out so far and record lessons learned.	Emergency Management Director, Lead Jurisdiction Planning Department Manager
Updating	Every 5 years, or after a disaster event.	Review the plan and document necessary updates as necessary for the next plan update.	Emergency Management Director, Lead Jurisdiction Planning Department Manager

The EMD will also seek feedback from the Emergency Managers group on the following:

- Are there any new representatives from jurisdictions, agencies, or organizations that you feel should be included in our stakeholder outreach?
- Do you feel your community has any new vulnerabilities that may be impacted by hazard events? (critical infrastructure, systems, or populations)
- Has your community identified any new mitigation activities that would help reduce risk to future hazard events?
- Are there any funding opportunities or other resources that may be available to help implement local mitigation activities?
- How is your community integrating information from the mitigation plan into other planning mechanisms (such as plans, policies, or partnerships)?