

FEMA Awards City of Ocala \$1.45 Million to Protect Water System from Storms

ORLANDO, Fla. – FEMA has approved a grant of \$1,454,257 for the City of Ocala to defray the cost of installing 20 backup generators and other improvements to its water system.

After Hurricane Irma in 2017, FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) will assist the city in maintaining continuous water service with the installation of generators at designated lift stations to provide emergency power during a storm. This includes replacing manhole covers and seals to reduce risk of sanitary overflow. The generators will be protected against wind and a 500-year flood event.

The grant is funded by the HMGP, an important source of federal disaster assistance. Funding from the program may become available following the president's declaration of a major disaster, with a goal of strengthening communities by improving buildings, facilities and infrastructure that people use every day. A 2018

report by the National Institute of Building Sciences found that one dollar spent on hazard mitigation will save more than six dollars of recovery and rebuilding costs.

Generally, the HMGP may provide a state, tribe or territory with additional grants up to 15 percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA for a federally declared disaster. States such as Florida that meet advanced mitigation planning criteria may qualify for a higher percentage.



Florida has a FEMA-approved Enhanced Mitigation Plan, making the state eligible for HMGP funding not to exceed 20 percent of the estimated total amount of grant money spent by FEMA in the Hurricane Irma disaster. From this amount, the HMGP reimburses the state up to 75 percent of eligible costs for hazard mitigation projects. The remaining amount comes from other sources such as state and local assets and a combination of cash and in-kind sources.

