

FEMA Approves \$1.6 Million Grant for City of Marianna

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PENSACOLA, Fla. — FEMA has approved a hazard mitigation grant of \$1,612,448 for the city of Marianna to protect its Public Works building by reducing potential wind damage and ensuring the facility is operational during future power outages.

Funding from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) was approved in response to a proposal by the city after Hurricane Michael in 2018. The city will provide wind protection for the building by retrofitting the existing roof, replacing all building openings with impact resistant hurricane products, reinforcing metal siding and installing an enclosure around fuel tanks.

The grant will also be used to purchase and install a permanent generator to keep the building operational during future power outages. The generator will include an automatic transfer switch – which allows for continuous delivery of power from either an electric company or a generator – and will be protected from flooding and wind up to 133 mph.

The HMGP is an important source of federal disaster assistance. Program funding may become available after the president declares a major disaster, with a goal of strengthening communities by improving buildings and critical infrastructure. A 2018 report by the National Institute of Building Sciences found that one dollar spent on hazard mitigation saves 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 Michael 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.

