The term "mitigation" describes actions which can help reduce or eliminate your long-term risk from natural disasters. With mitigation, you can avoid losses and reduce your risk of becoming a disaster victim.

There are many *low-cost* mitigation measures you can take to protect yourself, your home, or your business from losses. For example:

FLOODING

- Move valuables and appliances out of the basement of your home or business if it is prone to flooding. This will increase the chance that your belongings will remain dry when a flood occurs.
- Have the main breaker or fuse box and the utility meters elevated above the anticipated flood level in your home or business, so that flood water won't damage your utilities.
- Buy flood insurance to cover the value of your home and its contents. Not only will it give you greater peace of mind, but it will also greatly speed your recovery if a flood occurs. To learn more about flood insurance, contact your insurance company or agent, or call 1-800-427-4661.

EARTHQUAKES

- Bolt or strap cupboards and bookcases to the wall, and keep heavy objects on the lower shelves. This will reduce both damages and the possibility of injury to those in your home or business.
- Strap your water heater to a nearby wall using bands of perforated steel (commonly known as "plumber's tape"). If a gas water heater falls during an earthquake, it could break the gas line and start a fire.
- Install bolts to connect your home to its foundation. Anchor bolts cost as little as $2 a piece, but can prevent thousands of dollars of damage. Have them installed every six feet around the perimeter of your home.

HAZARD MITIGATION WORKS, AND IT CAN SAVE YOU MONEY. IT HELPS PROTECT YOUR FAMILY, YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR PROPERTY FROM THE EFFECTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS.

HURRICANES AND TORNADOES

- Have hurricane straps installed in your home or business to better secure the roof to the walls and foundation. This will reduce the risk of losing your roof to high winds.
- Install and maintain storm shutters to protect all exposed windows and glass surfaces, and use them when severe weather threatens. Besides protecting against wind, shutters also prevent damage from flying debris.
- Have your home inspected by a building professional to ensure that roof and other building components are capable of withstanding wind effects.

WILDFIRES

- Move shrubs and other landscaping away from the sides of your home or deck. All too often, homes burn when plantings around them catch fire.
- Install tile or flame-retardant shingles on your roof, instead of wood shakes or standard shingles. This will reduce the chance that airborne burning debris will end up destroying your home.
- Clear dead brush and grass from your property so that it will not provide fuel for a spreading fire.

MAKE SURE TO MITIGATE PROPERLY — THE FIRST TIME!

Most communities have building codes and ordinances which guide construction practices. Many of these are designed to reduce your risk from all types of hazards, including floods, earthquakes, high winds, and wildfires.

If you have any questions about local codes or ordinances, and how they may impact mitigation efforts in your home or business, contact a professional or your building official. Either should be able to provide you with the assistance you need to mitigate right the first time.

Mitigation Begins With You — Learn to Build Stronger, Safer, Smarter!

To learn more about hazard mitigation measures that you can take to reduce your risk from disasters, visit FEMA's Internet site (www.fema.gov), or call 1-800-480-2520 to have a list of available mitigation publications mailed to your home or office.

You can also contact the FEMA Regional Office nearest you:

FEMA Region I (*serving CT, NH, ME, MA, RI, VT*)
J.W. McCormack Post Office
Courthouse Bldg., Rm. 442
Boston, MA 02109 tel: (617) 223-9540

FEMA Region II (*serving NJ, NY, PR, VI*)
26 Federal Plaza, Rm. 1337
New York, NY 10278 tel: (212) 225-7209

FEMA Region III (*serving DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV*)
Liberty Square Bldg., 2nd Floor
105 S. Seventh St.
Philadelphia, PA 19106 tel: (215) 931-5608

FEMA Region IV (*serving AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN*)
Koger Center - Rutgers Bldg.
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, GA 30341 tel: (770) 220-5200

FEMA Region V (*serving IL, IN, OH, MN, WI*)
175 W. Jackson Blvd., 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604 tel: (312) 409-5518

FEMA Region VI (*serving AR, LA, NM, OK, TX*)
Federal Regional Center
800 N. Loop
Denton, TX 76201 tel: (817) 898-5127

FEMA Region VII (*serving IA, KS, MO, NE*)
2323 Grand Blvd., Ste. 900
Kansas City, MO 64108 tel: (816) 283-7060

FEMA Region VIII (*serving CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY*)
Denver Federal Center, Bldg. 710
Box 25267
Denver, CO 80225 tel: (303) 235-4830

FEMA Region IX (*serving AZ, CA, HI, NV*)
Building 105, the Presidio
San Francisco, CA 94129 tel: (415) 923-7175

FEMA Region X (*serving AK, ID, OR, WA*)
Federal Regional Center
130 228th St., SW
Bothell, WA 98021 tel: (206) 481-8800

Is your family, home, or business protected from natural disasters?

They can be.

REDUCE YOUR RISK FROM NATURAL DISASTERS

Federal Emergency Management Agency
Reach us on the Internet at http://www.fema.gov