

Hazard Mitigation Messaging Techniques

What is Hazard Mitigation?

Hazard mitigation breaks the cycle of response and recovery by planning for hazards, increasing preparedness, and implementing actions that reduce the impacts of future disasters to people and property.

Benefits of Hazard Mitigation

Hazard mitigation reduces vulnerability to and impacts of natural disasters, leading to safer communities that are less reliant on financial assistance to recover from future events.

Having a hazard mitigation plan enables a community to be eligible for certain grants which can fund projects for improving drainage systems, purchasing safe rooms, improving infrastructure, buying out homes in flood-prone areas, and many other actions.

For every \$1 spent on resilience and preparedness to natural disasters, \$13 are saved from long-term economic impact, damages avoided, and cleanup after an event¹.

For every \$1 spent on disaster preparedness, a community could save \$7 in economic costs, including job losses, reduced incomes, and other economic impacts¹.

For every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation, a community could save \$11 by adopting model building codes².

Short, plain language phrases:

- Hazard mitigation saves lives, money, and resources.
- Hazard mitigation protects people and bank accounts.
- Hazard mitigation: Saves lives, saves money, protects and preserves property.
- Hazard mitigation may reduce insurance premiums.
- Hazard mitigation prevents economic development from being damaged.

¹ U.S. Chamber of Commerce 2024 *Climate Resiliency Report*: <https://www.uschamber.com/security/the-preparedness-payoff-the-economic-benefits-of-investing-in-climate-resilience>.

² Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves 2019 Report: https://nibs.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/NIBS_MMC_MitigationSaves_2019-1.pdf.

- Hazard mitigation: Spend \$1 now, save \$7 down the line.
- Hazard mitigation protects jobs that would otherwise be lost in the aftermath of a disaster.
- Natural disasters disrupt our lives, at increasingly higher costs. Mitigation makes the disasters less impactful on the community.
- Recovering *after* a disaster costs more than reducing the impacts *before* a disaster strikes.

Cost of Disasters

The United States currently experiences about nine weather and climate disasters per year that cost at least \$1 billion³. Below are some state-tailored statistics. The statistics below do not account for smaller events that did not meet the \$1 billion threshold.

State-specific costs³, only for events that met the \$1 billion threshold:

- Weather and climate disasters cost **Oklahoma** at least \$20 billion from 1980-2024, mostly from severe storms and drought. That is equivalent to **\$109 per capita annually**, on average.
- Weather and climate disasters cost **Arkansas** at least \$20 billion from 1980-2024, mostly from severe storms and drought. That is equivalent to **\$144 per capita annually**, on average.
- Weather and climate disasters cost **Texas** at least \$440 billion from 1980-2024, mostly from tropical cyclones, severe storms, drought, and winter storms. That is equivalent to **\$312 per capita annually**, on average.
- Weather and climate disasters cost **Louisiana** at least \$310 billion from 1980-2024, mostly from tropical cyclones, flooding, and severe storms. That is equivalent to **\$1,498 per capita annually**, on average.

³ National Centers for Environmental Information Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters: <https://www.uschamber.com/security/the-preparedness-payoff-the-economic-benefits-of-investing-in-climate-resilience>. Note that the \$1 billion event threshold can reflect damage that occurred across more than one state.