

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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December 6, 2010

Emergency Management Directors:

Texas has been presented with a time sensitive opportunity to build one or more, domed hurricane shelters in your jurisdiction, under the Texas Safe Shelter Initiative Program (TSSI). These structures are intended to provide sheltering for at risk populations that are very difficult to evacuate in hazardous weather events, sheltering of last resort for emergency responders, and as tornado shelters for the general population. These domed structures (ranging in size from 3,000 square feet to a maximum of 20,000 square feet) can be an important asset to local communities and can be used during non-emergency times in many beneficial ways such as community event centers, meeting rooms, gymnasiums, and band halls.

The general information on the program is as follows:

- Concept: The project is for domed structures that can withstand 200 miles per hour winds, wall penetration by wind driven debris, and which have emergency power provided.
- Purpose: To reduce the evacuation difficulties of at risk populations,
- Funding Source: Federal Hazard Mitigation Funds.
- Construction type: Dome construction was selected because the structures are cost effective, (normally less than half the cost of rectangular construction), energy efficient, and very low maintenance.
- Points of Implementation:
 1. 75% Federal funding – 25% local match required (in-kind and any other non-federal funds). This is a reimbursement grant; applicants must incur costs and then be reimbursed.
 2. Structures must be built above 24 feet mean sea level and outside the 500 year flood plain.
 3. Eligible project funding covers structure, emergency generator for the facility, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and ADA parking/access requirements.
 4. Sub-applicant determines facility locations and selects the contractor through their normal local bid process.
 5. TDEM provides a project officer to develop the application, provide consultation for capturing in-kind match, and assist with the project through closing.

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6. Match funding can be any non-federal source such as Texas Department of Rural Affairs (regular or Ike Supplemental funds round 2), local bonds, school bonds, private donations, and in-kind for all non federally funded employees and equipment.
7. Construction must be completed within 30 months of the final approval of your project.

The next step is for you to contact your Regional Liaison Officer or one of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) Mitigation Project Officers (contact list attached), to get additional details and begin your application process. It is important to note that not all coastal communities may desire to participate, and thus you may not be limited to the number of shelters initially allocated to your jurisdiction. You should consider additional potential shelter locations for which local match and a supplementary use can be identified.

Stage 1 is a letter of intended participation in TSSI with final shelter locations and alternate uses identified – the deadline for Stage 1 is February 4th, 2011. If you can meet the stage 1 information requirements before Feb 4th, by all means do so.

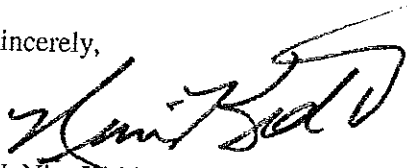
Stage 2 is the shelter operations plan development – the TDEM project officer will assist with this – the deadline for Stage 2 is March 4th, 2011.

Stage 3 is the completed application to be submitted to FEMA – the deadline for Stage 3 is March 18, 2011.

There is a conference call scheduled on January 11, 2011 for additional questions.

TDEM asks you to please consider this valuable opportunity to both protect your citizens and enhance the facilities in your communities.

Sincerely,



W. Nim Kidd, CEM
Assistant Director
Texas Department of Public Safety
Chief
Texas Division of Emergency Management

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Attachment: List of Regional Liaison Officers and TDEM Project Officers by County