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Natural Resources District

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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All-Hazard Mitigation Planning Meetings Scheduled

Public invited to participate

If your town is threatened by a tornado and you're in a structure with no basement, where would you go to protect yourself during the storm? If your home or business is damaged, would you know what to do to start rebuilding?

If a winter storm knocks out electric power and the lines can't be fixed for days—or weeks, how would you react? Who's there to help?

Plans to prepare for these situations and other natural disasters, such as floods, wind storms, droughts, wildfires, and dam failures, are all part of a plan currently being developed for each community in your county.

Tri-Basin Natural Resources District (NRD) is partnering with Gosper, Kearney, and Phelps Counties and their Emergency Management Directors to develop an All-Hazards Mitigation Plan. An All-Hazards Mitigation Plan must be completed and approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) before any local governmental entity can receive federal funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Programs, such as Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP), post-disaster funds, Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) funding; Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA); Repetitive Flood Claim (RFC), and the Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Programs.

The first step in developing the All-Hazards Mitigation Plan is to hold public meetings in each county to receive public comments about potential disaster types, problem areas, and potential mitigation solutions. This is your chance to provide input for your community and what steps you'd like to see taken to protect it.

Public officials and citizens are encouraged to attend a meeting to learn more about the planning process, what information is needed to develop the plan and how they can participate.

“The public’s participation is critical for a successful plan,” said John Thorburn, manager of the Tri-Basin NRD. “We hope that local residents can provide some of the detailed information that we need for this plan.”

Meetings have been set for the following counties and locations:

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|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| March 24 | 7:00 p.m. | Gosper Co. | American Legion, Elwood |
| March 25 | 1:30 p.m. | Phelps Co. | Tri-Basin Offices, Holdrege |
| March 27 | 1:30 p.m. | Kearney Co. | First National Bank, Minden |

Public comments will be reviewed, compiled, and added to the plan. Tri-Basin NRD has hired Olsson Associates to develop the plan over the next 18 months. A second series of public meetings will be scheduled later in the project to review a draft plan.