As FEMA’s trusted hazard mitigation advisors, our civil/structural engineers and program experts have advised FEMA staff and project sponsors on mitigation solutions since inception of the Public Assistance Section 406 hazard mitigation program and early Hazard Mitigation Assistance grant programs.

Through support to FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Technical Assistance Program (HMTAP) and the Technical Assistance and Research Contract (TARC), we have developed and delivered hundreds of hazard mitigation technical tipsheets, advisories, handbooks, and courses in EMI and 508-compliant formats. We’ve responded to disaster impacted areas immediately after the emergency to assess damages and determine why buildings fail.

Each Dewberry instructor is mentored by senior instructor cadre members. We have the ability to convey complex mitigation principles to each class participant. At Dewberry, we believe in a multi-media approach that takes the classroom to the participant whether through distance learning, just-in-time training, or special arrangements.

**Benefit-Cost Analysis**

FEMA HMA guidance requires that residential, non-residential, and infrastructure mitigation projects must be cost-beneficial per federal OMB rules. We have supported BCA module updates and have taught hundreds of students nationwide for two decades. Today more than ever, it takes experienced instructors with an all-hazards understanding to explain the 4.5.5 version of the module to new and experienced mitigation project sponsors. We developed key aspects of the software, including the challenging DFA module, so we can help clients gain the necessary understanding of the model’s use as applied to grant projects.

**Residential Retrofitting**

More than $8 billion in federal HMA grant funds have supported mitigation projects since inception of mitigation grant programs more than two decades ago. Most of the nation’s mitigation investment has been in acquisition/demolition, elevation and relocation of residential buildings.

Modification of housing stock that has often been subjected to repetitive flooding or other damage requires engineering and building code knowledge along with local procedures and federal grant requirements.

Our instructors lead participants through complex processes to inform residential mitigation project options and ultimate solutions. This course is recommended for local project sponsors and state mitigation staff.

**Coastal Construction**

Design of elevated buildings in designated velocity elevation zones is one of the most challenging residential retrofit projects a local government or state can sponsor. These projects are often desired to protect housing stock and the local tax base in coastal and resort communities.

Our instructors lead participants through siting, permitting, foundation design, material selection, and construction regulatory processes necessary to build wind- and flood-resilient buildings in coastal environments. This course is often offered to local building officials, contractors, and state mitigation staff following coastal disasters to support strong recovery efforts.

**Damage Assessment**

Critical to obtaining federal emergency and post-disaster aid is a valid local initial damage assessment that fully characterizes local and state expenditures to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies and disasters. Damage to and replacement costs for local and state government infrastructure and facilities must be accurately estimated.

In addition, damage to uninsured residential and nonresidential property, such as businesses, is necessary to qualify for essential FEMA Individual and Households Assistance (IAHP) and SBA loan programs, which accompany a Presidential Declaration of Disaster.

Our experts will position process damage reports and organize and conduct local Initial Damage Assessments (IDAs) so that local jurisdictions can report to their state EOC within the recommended 72 hours, fast-tracking aid to the community.

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We see beyond standard requirements

Program Support

Implementation of comprehensive state or local hazard mitigation programs that reduce injury and property damage while maintaining critical societal functions are challenging today’s limited government resources.

Our experienced team of engineers, mitigation planners, computer analysts, and GIS specialists have supported local, state, and federal hazard mitigation programs for nearly two decades. We offer an integrated, full-service hazard mitigation practice that can be customized to meet your specific program needs.

First, we listen to client program support challenges, needs and opportunities; then we follow-up with customized products and deliverables that expand local and state mitigation program management capacity and capability to protect people, property, and infrastructure.

Our team of former State Hazard Mitigation Officers, NFIP Coordinators, local emergency managers, and FEMA program leaders are supplemented by national emergency management and mitigation subject matter experts. We develop project-specific teams for every client with redundant staff at each position to provide you with promised deliverables on time and within budget. It’s the Dewberry Way!

Mitigation Planning

To date, we have facilitated more than 200 local and multi-jurisdictional plan updates, five state hazard mitigation plans or plan updates, and 12 disaster resistant university plans.

Mitigation planning, as envisioned through the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, positions states, local governments, tribes, and universities to:

- Better analyze hazards
- Develop mitigation actions responsive to those hazards
- Link prioritized mitigation actions to the comprehensive array of programs, policies and funding mechanisms available to support implementation
- Outline an implementation strategy with responsibilities and deadlines clearly delineated

At Dewberry, our mitigation planners provide clients with technical mitigation planning support and facilitation—we do the heavy lifting—so stakeholders can focus their local knowledge and imagination toward developing a comprehensive, practical mitigation program.

Our record of FEMA conditionally approved, governmentally adopted mitigation plans is unsurpassed by any other firm.

Technical Training

Dewberry engineers, planners, and GIS experts rank among the most requested EMI-certified hazard mitigation instructors in the country. Whether at EMI or teaching G-level FEMA courses at the state or local level, we excel in helping clients with “Out-of-the-Box” EMI courses, customized material or “Just-In-Time-Training” to respond to local, regional, or state needs.

We are nimble in our delivery of training because we developed many of FEMA’s technical mitigation courses and the accompanying documents such as Residential Retrofitting, Coastal Construction, and various versions of the Benefit-Cost Analysis training.

We lead in distance learning training delivery, providing many courses to audiences via WebEx and other media. We also have a full-service training suite at our Fairfax, Virginia, headquarters, which has been used for FEMA WebEx training and topical technical charrettes.