

# Regional Update

A Monthly Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

February 2004

## Eastern Shore Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

The Eastern Shore Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, funded through a grant from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and FEMA, will be the first step to reducing the damage associated with natural disasters by examining risk in both Accomack and Northampton Counties. This is Phase I in meeting the federal requirement for both counties and the Town of Chincoteague to have local hazard mitigation plans.

The federal government has documented an increase in disaster costs. For this reason, FEMA is encouraging reduction in damages to private and public property through mitigation. Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards. FEMA encourages mitigation through several grant programs. In the future, those grants will only be available if all local jurisdictions have a mitigation plan.

An Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Committee is being formed with members from both counties, several towns and other organizations from all over the Eastern Shore. It is expected that the Eastern Shore Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment will be completed by next September. The Vir-

ginia Department of Emergency Management is reviewing an additional grant request, for Hurricane Isabel disaster funding, to complete an Eastern Shore Hazard Mitigation Plan that meets the requirement for hazard mitigation plans.

Hurricane Isabel recently affected the Eastern Shore. She was the latest storm in a long history of coastal storms affecting the Eastern Shore since Colonial times. On average, over the last 71 years the Eastern Shore has experienced a major coastal storm approximately once every 6 years.

Accomack County officials estimate that 16.6% of the county's homes are

in the 100-year flood zone. That represents about 6,359 people who are vulnerable to flooding. Northampton County officials estimate that a Category 3 hurricane could affect up to 4,930 of the county's people. Other natural hazards also cause damage, including winter weather, tornados, wild-fires and drought.

All residents of the Eastern Shore will benefit from hazard mitigation planning. By considering the local disasters that could occur the county officials and residents can make the best decision about to keep themselves, their families and property safe.



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# Enterprise Zone Seminar

Mike Locher of Goodman & Company will make a presentation about Enterprise Zone incentives on February 24 at 6:00 pm at Little Italy Restaurant in Nassawadox. All of Northampton County and portions of Accomack County are included in an Enterprise Zone.

The Virginia Enterprise Zone program provides incentives to companies that create new full-time jobs or invest in real estate improvements. Three substantial financial incentives are available to encourage business locations and expansions within the Zone:

The General Income Tax Credit provides ten years of credits against the Virginia Income Tax. 80% reduction of 1st year's tax, and 60% reduction in years 2 through 10.

The Real Property Improvement Tax Credit provides a Virginia Income Tax credit of 30% of qualified zone improvements (not to exceed \$125,000 in a 5-year period). New construction projects must cost at least \$250,000.

If the company's tax liability is less than the credit earned, the remaining balance will be paid directly to the company.

Businesses are eligible to receive job grants for three consecutive years after increasing total employment by at least 10%. Virginia will provide the business with a \$1,000 grant per year for each Zone resident hired to a permanent full-time job. \$500 will be granted for each non-Zone resident hired to a permanent full-time job for the same 3-year period.

Enterprise zone incentives are subject to reduction by state budgetary constraints.

The seminar is sponsored by the Small Business Development Center, the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, Eastern Shore Community College and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Economic Development Commission.

To attend the presentation, please pre-register by calling Sarah Gromow at the Small Business Development Center, 789-3418.

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# Free Lead Safety Training for Building Contractors

The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission and the Eastern Shore Community College will soon offer free lead safety training for building contractors. As part of Accomack County's Eastern Shore Lead Safe Homes Planning Grant there will be three levels of training:

- A Renovator/Remodeler class that will teach Lead Safe Work Practices and OSHA standards for working with lead hazards. (1-day class)
- A Lead Worker class that will give participants the necessary training to become licensed Lead Workers (2-day class)
- A Lead Supervisors class that will give participants the necessary training to become Lead Abatement Contractors (4-day class).

The goal of the training is to help contractors fill the growing demand for lead abatement services and to increase contractor availability for housing programs. Currently, if citizens need lead abatement services, they have to hire licensed lead contractors from off the Eastern Shore.

The first week in March has been tentatively scheduled for some of the classes. Free spaces in the classes will be limited in number and are only available to contractors from Virginia's Eastern Shore. For more information, contact Heather Garvis, Community Development Coordinator for the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission at 757-787-2936.

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# David Annis Appointed to NCALL Board

David F. Annis, Director of Housing Production for the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission, has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor Research Fund, Inc (NCALL).

NCALL is a Delaware based non-profit corporation that provides technical assistance and pre-development

loans to housing organizations and developers of affordable housing. The technical assistance includes helping build capacity of non-profits, and developing and packaging funding applications for a variety of State and Federal housing programs. NCALL provides these services in an area that includes 21 states.

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# Accomack County Appointments to Boards and Committees

Accomack County Board of Supervisors have made the following appointments to Boards and Committees:

Supervisor Wanda J. Thornton has been appointed to the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission replacing former Supervisor C.D. Fleming, Jr.

Supervisor Laura Belle Gordy has been appointed to the Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Partnership replacing Supervisor Gregory Duncan.

Supervisor Thomas J. Matthews

has been appointed to the Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Service Authority replacing Supervisor Laura Belle Gordy.

Supervisor Thomas J. Matthews and Citizen Donald Sawyer have been appointed to the Accomack-Northampton Housing and Redevelopment Corporation.

Supervisor Thomas J. Matthews has been appointed to the Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Committee replacing former Supervisor C.D. Fleming, Jr.



## How to Contact the A-NPDC

If you have questions or comments about anything in this publication, please don't hesitate to contact the Planning District Commission.

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