



SECTION 5 RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk, for the purpose of hazard mitigation planning, is the potential for damage, loss or other impacts created by the interaction of hazards with community assets. A risk assessment provides the foundation for the community's decision-makers to evaluate mitigation measures that can help reduce the impacts of a hazard when one occurs (Sections 6 and 9). The process focuses on the following:

Risk Assessment

- ✓ *The process of measuring the potential for damage or loss caused by the interaction of hazards with community assets such as people, buildings, infrastructure, the economy and/or the environment.*

Step 1: The first step of the risk assessment process is to identify the hazards of concern. FEMA's current regulations only require an evaluation of natural hazards. Natural hazards are natural events that threaten lives, property, and many other assets. Often, natural hazards can be predicted, where they tend to occur repeatedly in the same geographical locations because they are related to weather patterns or physical characteristics of an area. The identified hazards of concern for Burlington County are presented in Section 5.1

Step 2: The next step of the risk assessment is to prepare a profile for each hazard of concern. These profiles assist communities in evaluating and comparing the hazards that can impact their area. Each type of hazard has unique characteristics that vary from event to event. The profile for each hazard is presented in Section 5.4 and is organized as follows:

- Identify and describe hazards
- Location of the hazards and areas vulnerable to damage
- Extent (i.e. strength or magnitude) of hazard
- Previous occurrences of hazard
- Probability of future hazard events, including changes in weather patterns and climate

Step 3: To understand risk, a community must evaluate what assets it possesses and which assets are exposed or vulnerable to the identified hazards of concern. Hazard profile information combined with data regarding population, demographics, general building stock, and critical facilities at risk, located in Section 4, prepares the community to develop risk scenarios and estimate potential damages and losses for each hazard. The vulnerability assessment methodology and assets evaluated are described in Section 5.2 and the results are presented in Section 5.4.

Step 4: To summarize vulnerability, each community can rank the identified hazards based on factors related to the risks faced. These risk factors include the probability of occurrence and impacts. The hazard ranking methodology and results are presented in Section 5.3.