



## Partners in Prevention

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### **2017 Texas State Collaborative Annual Meeting Convenes in Austin**

Thank you to our meeting sponsors from State Farm and our data analysis partners from FEMA for making the 5th [Texas State Collaborative](#) (#TSC2017) possible this month in Austin. Nearly 70 professionals turned out to provide briefings, enjoy networking, and advance our all-hazard mission to boost the resilience of Texas communities. As planned, building performance in Hurricane Harvey, new building code laws, and voluntary beyond-code initiatives took center stage. The day started with the group sharing “Aha’s” from Hurricane Harvey where the following themes emerged:

- We need to redouble efforts to expand floodplain knowledge for residents as well as elected officials.
- We must prioritize and plan for those with access and functional needs as disasters deliver cascading challenges for them.
- Nearly everyone needs flood insurance, yet too many do not have it.
- We need to expand education efforts regarding flood insurance basics.
- Many excellent volunteer efforts made the difference, e.g., “The Cajun Navy.”
- The interagency cooperation and coordination worked.
- The public confused evacuation and flood zones—many didn’t understand either.
- Inadequate environmental and zoning policies led to some failures.
- Recovery may be negatively impacted by the current labor shortage in construction trades.
- Post-storm recovery processes can be confusing to the public.
- Wind damage and building failures in Rockport were extensive, and many could have been prevented through the installation of metal connectors or hurricane shutters.
- Conservative estimates put the automobile total losses at 500,000 vehicles.
- Texas remains known as “flash-flood alley” and is prone to wildfire devastation too, so our work must always be cognizant of all perils.

The agenda continued with briefings on the Hurricane Harvey meteorology story, field reports on building performance, an update on HB2040 regarding codes in Texas counties, the new FLASH [commentary](#) on the status of Texas building codes, and FEMA recovery policies and resources. Panel discussions focused on education opportunities, ways to support recovery, and market-based initiatives like the IBHS Fortified program.

The meeting closed with the group identifying focus areas for future TSC activities. The partners identified a demonstration home as the most popular idea. As a result, the TSC is now seeking volunteers from within the coalition, or newcomers, to form an exploratory committee for the effort.

Presentations and slides from the TSC meeting are available for download at this [link](#). The commentary is available [here](#). Please send any questions or suggestions to [Mike Rimoldi](#). If you are willing to join the demonstration project committee, email [Leslie Chapman-Henderson](#).