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**FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ALABAMA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

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**AEMA celebrates safe room opening in Calhoun County**

CLANTON – The Alabama Emergency Management Agency (AEMA) and Calhoun County will celebrate a safer Alabama community on September 9. A grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funded the construction of a community safe room at Piedmont High School. Open house will be Wednesday, September 9, at 11:00am at 750 Alabama Highway 200 in Piedmont.

The purpose of the new facility is to safely shelter Piedmont students and faculty if necessary during the school day or participants and spectators at school sporting events. After hours it will be available as emergency shelter for local residents.

"Safe room projects help communities ensure that residents will be out of harm's way as quickly as possible," said AEMA Director Brock Long. "Staff members in AEMA's Hazard Mitigation Branch are dedicated to the purpose of reducing loss of life and property through grant assistance to communities in the State of Alabama."

The 5,000-square-foot safe room will be able to withstand winds of up to 200 mph and is equipped with a generator to provide backup power in the event of a power loss. The \$750,000 grant represents 75 percent of the total project cost of approximately \$1 million and is made possible through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The remainder will come from non-federal sources.

HMGP provides grants to States and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. AEMA and FEMA representatives have recently been involved in HMGP briefings around the state. For more information about the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program contact the AEMA Mitigation office at 205-280-2200.

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**For more information contact the AEMA Public Information Office  
(205)280-2275 or (205)280-2255  
Visit us online at [www.ema.alabama.gov](http://www.ema.alabama.gov).**