



**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **Renewal of the Residential Safe Room Rebate Program**

**January 22, 1011** – The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) announced today the start of the renewed Panhandle Residential Safe Room Rebate Program. This program provides Texas Panhandle residents assistance with the installation of safe rooms, or tornado shelters, meeting the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) standards for wind resiliency, in or around their homes. Applicants accepted for this program will receive a rebate of up to 50%, not to exceed \$3,000, for the installation of a FEMA-compliant shelter at their place of residence.

“No doubt, anyone who has spent any amount of time in the Panhandle is well-familiar with tornados”, said John Kiehl, PRPC Regional Services Director. “This program was designed for areas of the country like ours. This region is prone to tornados and many homes don’t come equipped with basements. When tornados strike, people need a safe place to shelter; one that’s built to withstand the type of punch a tornado can carry. That’s really what this program is about; it provides folks the opportunity for to affordably protect themselves and their families when tornados threaten their community.”

The PRPC previously operated the Residential Safe Room Rebate Program between 2006 and 2008. During those two years, the program resulted in the installation of 1,415 tornado shelters in homes across the Panhandle. For this renewed program, the PRPC currently has 350 rebates available.

Residents interested in applying for a rebate can download the application package off the PRPC’s website at: [www.theprpc.org](http://www.theprpc.org) or they can contact Elizabeth Thomas, PRPC’s Regional Services Program Specialist for the package at (806) 372-3381. Applications for this round of rebates will be accepted by the PRPC through February 18, 2011.

“I had the pleasure of working with the region’s original shelter program”, said Ms. Thomas “and I’m looking forward to this next phase of the project. The residents I interacted with felt a great sense of comfort just knowing they had a safe place to go to whenever their local tornado sirens sounded.”

The Panhandle Residential Safe Room Rebate program is being funded by a grant received by the PRPC from FEMA under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. This program is open to residents throughout the 26-county area of the Texas Panhandle.

