



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF LOWER BERGEN COUNTY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***FEMA Grant to Support Much Needed  
Flood Mitigation Efforts at the Boys & Girls Club of Lodi***

**[Lodi, N.J.]** — The Boys & Girls Clubs of Lower Bergen County has been awarded over \$300,000 in grant funds from FEMA, to address much-needed flood mitigation efforts at their Lodi Clubhouse.

The Boys & Girls Club of Lodi has sustained substantial flood damage many times over the years of its existence. The 65,000+ square foot facility, located at 460 Passaic Avenue in Lodi, sits on the bank of the Saddle River.

In recent times, the Clubhouse sustained significant damage to both its interior and exterior from Tropical Storm Floyd in 1999, a Nor'easter in 2007, and Hurricane Irene in 2011, resulting in lengthy Club closures, the cancelation of programs, and costly repairs. In 2012, the Club executed a flood mitigation plan, waterproofing areas prone to water penetration, installing a flood panel system on exterior doors, ejector pumps, and an emergency generator, to ensure the pumps work in a power outage. The organization had to use a combination of insurance proceeds and SBA disaster loans to make the facility repairs and improvements, as they were not eligible for FEMA funding during those events.

Between 2012 and 2020, the Club did not have a true test of its mitigation efforts, as there had not been a major flood since Hurricane Irene, with the exception of multiple instances of parking lot flooding. And so, the building remained dry until 2021.

In 2021, the Remnants of Hurricane Ida wreaked havoc on the Lodi Clubhouse and the Borough of Lodi as a whole. CEO, Joseph Licata said "We were completely under water for about 22 hours. The basement which contains the ejector pumps, sump pumps, and our indoor pool's entire filtration system, had water about three feet below the ceiling. We had inches of water in many areas

throughout the first floor, and sustained damage to the outside of the building as well. Our front fence came down, we lost many interior and exterior contents and equipment, and we had a parking lot full of mud and debris, so cleanup was extensive." Once the water receded, New Jersey Governor Murphy even made a visit to the Boys & Girls Club of Lodi to survey the damage.

Licata said "The Clubhouse was closed for about three weeks for cleaning and repairs, but without the mitigation efforts put into place in 2012, the inches of water on the first floor would have been feet of water. Flood Insurance proceeds, grants and donations, and FEMA Disaster relief funds played a critical role in funding the necessary repairs. Since we were eligible for FEMA Funds this time, the Club **did not have to borrow one cent**, as compared to hundreds of thousands for previous disasters, to get the facility reopened for the children."

In working with FEMA on those recent repair projects, the Club knew it was crucial to implement an updated flood mitigation strategy. Mr. Licata said, "One thing was clear from Ida, mitigation does work, and after this first test, we know the deficits of the current mitigation measures and where improvements can be made." Fortunately, FEMA not only supports rebuilding after a disaster, but also the implementation of preventative measures to limit damages from future flooding.

And so, the Club has been approved to receive just over \$300,000 in FEMA grant funds for flood mitigation. The funds will be used to install interior and exterior waterproofing, particularly on the exterior wall(s) of the gymnasium, which does not have a basement, where flood waters seeped through the walls and filled the gym with 5 inches of water during Ida. In addition, a new flood door system will be installed to replace the outdated flood panel system. The flood panel system is very labor intensive and is near impossible to install without a few days' notice and a crew of at least five individuals with a truck to move the panels. The new flood doors would replace all existing exterior doors on the facility, and with the simple turning of a lock at the top and bottom of each door, the doors make a watertight seal. This new flood door system is crucial, as the Club has been experiencing flash floods that come with short notice.

## **To Learn More & Donate**

Boys & Girls Clubs of Lower Bergen County offers life-enhancing programs, opportunities, and experiences that many children and teens would not have outside of our Clubs. To learn more about the programs offered at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lower Bergen County, visit our website at [www.bgclbergen.org](http://www.bgclbergen.org). To help support our life-changing youth programs please donate by visiting [www.bgclbergen.org/donate-now/](http://www.bgclbergen.org/donate-now/).

## **About Boys & Girls Clubs of Lower Bergen County**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Lower Bergen County's (BGCLBC) mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens. BGCLBC strives to instill strong character, leadership skills, academic success and healthy living habits among their members and see them through high school graduation with a plan for their future. BGCLBC is the place where great futures are started each and every day.

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