

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT TIPS

December 2014

FEMA's Flood Map Service Center website has a new look

Everyone who has made a FIRMette or looked up flood maps has been to the website for the Flood Map Service Center. This website went through changes on July 28, 2014 and now looks a little different. The website address is: <http://msc.fema.gov/portal>.

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The easiest way to view maps is to type in an address. I found that this works better for me when I know the zip code. After you enter an address you can click on the blue magnifying glass to view information or the green download button to download data. Downloading a set of data for an entire county can take several hours so it will usually be best to use the viewing option.

Another method of finding information is to click your mouse on the words "Search All Products" just below the address search. Use the dropdown lists to select your community. You can look at either the effective products or historic products. The effective products will include a list of items such as Flood Insurance Studies, Letters of Map Change (LOMC) and the National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL). Historic products are useful in order to find out if a property was in compliance with a previous flood map at the time it was built.

Some things have not changed. The map viewer is the same as it has always been. The process of making a FIRMette has not changed either. Try out the redesigned website and become familiar with all it has to offer.

Screen shot from Flood Map Service Center



The screenshot shows the FEMA Flood Map Service Center website. At the top, there is a search bar and navigation links for "MSC Home", "MSC Search", "MSC Products and Tools", "MSC How-To", and "MSC Email Subscriptions". The main content area is titled "Search by Address" and shows a search for "6531 SE Forbes Ave., Topeka, KS". The results indicate that the selected location is in Shawnee County and that the flood map for the area is number 20177C0216E, effective on 09/29/2011. There are buttons for "VIEW" and "DOWNLOAD". Below this, there is a section for "Letters of Map Change" with sub-sections for "Revisions (0)", "Amendments (0)", and "Revalidations (1)". The main part of the screenshot is a map showing flood map boundaries for the area around Topeka, Kansas. The map is overlaid with a grid of flood map boundaries, each labeled with a unique identifier (e.g., 20177C0216E). A legend in the bottom left corner identifies the map features: "Selected Flood Map Boundary" (blue outline), "Printed Flood Map Boundary" (red outline), "Non-printed Flood Map Boundary" (grey outline), and "Unmapped Area" (white). The map also shows major roads like I-70 and I-480, and local streets like SE 4th St and SE 17th St. The Esri logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the map area.

No-Rise Analysis in the Floodway

A question came up recently about reconstruction of an existing residential property located in a floodway. The community floodplain manager had questions about the need for a no-rise analysis and how to go about doing the analysis for a building that existed prior to the regulatory flood map. When the floodways on a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) are created they don't model each and every home and garage. Chad Voigt, Water Structures Program Manager, provided the following explanation:

Whenever an evaluation of project impacts is required, the first step is to verify if existing conditions were accurate in the effective flood study. At this location, the building was there prior to the floodway delineation. In this case, the floodway was defined without regard to an existing building, so a "corrected effective" model should be completed. That establishes the correct starting point for an assessment of the new project.

Model #1 should be the effective model. Report the effective base flood elevations.

Model #2 should be the effective model, with the mapped zone AE fringes completely blocked. Report the effective 'with floodway' elevations.

Model #3 should be the corrected effective model, showing the building blockage (or any other corrections needed) as it existed at the time of the FIS. Report the corrected effective base flood elevations.

Model #4 should take model #3 and completely block the mapped zone AE fringes. Report the corrected effective 'with floodway' elevations.

Model #5 should add the proposed project change to Model #3. Report the proposed base flood elevations.

Model #6 should take model #5 and completely block the mapped zone AE fringes. Report the proposed 'with floodway' elevations.

The 'no-rise' certification must report elevations to support these statements:

The base flood elevation is not increased by the proposed project (model #5 – model #3) and

The floodway elevation is not increased by the proposed project (model #6 – model #4).

This explanation of modeling may be useful to other communities faced with a similar situation. It is a fairly common question that gets asked about buildings in a floodway.

DWR Permit Contacts

Floodplain management codes in most communities include a requirement to verify that necessary federal, state and local permits have been obtained before approving a local floodplain development permit. One of the first steps in the permit review process must be to contact DWR to ask if the developer has an approved DWR permit. Permit requirements are based on the type of activity, the location within the floodplain, the size of the structure and the size of the watershed. Contact the DWR Water Structures Program to discuss specific locations. They can be reached in Manhattan at 785-564-6650.

Mitigation in Lane County

Bill Taldo is the Emergency Management Director for Lane County. There was flooding in the area of unincorporated Healy on April 22, 2010. It was after that event that Bill Taldo helped Lane County and the City of Dighton to enroll in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Much of the following story uses Bill's own words.

Bill explained to Division of Water Resources staff how he was first notified of the flooding on April 22, 2010. Up until that point it had been a typical dry year with occasional small showers, intermittent dust storms and wild land fires. Bill travelled on Highway 4 to investigate the reported flooding. Bill saw a propane tank and debris floating east on Highway 4. Water was 4 to 6 feet deep and flowing heavily. It had rained 7 inches east of Healy and drained where Mother Nature decided.

Flood insurance was not available for homes and elevators that had been flooded. No insurance was available to help clean up the mess. Household insurance does not cover flooding issues. Bill found that the damage to numerous homes and businesses was excessive. Bill is firm believer that floods do happen in flat lands of Kansas.

Bill saw it, as his job in Lane County Emergency Management, to investigate avenues that might mitigate the financial burden of flooding from happening again. The mitigation action that Bill looked in to was the National Flood Insurance Program. Lane County and the City of Dighton enrolled in the NFIP with help from Bill. Citizens of those communities may now purchase flood insurance. After heavy rains, earlier this year, several homes in Dighton were flooded and were able to file claims for flood insurance.

Bill says he would encourage anyone involved in mitigation planning or emergency management to investigate the NFIP program for their own communities. Bill found enrolling in the program to be simple and the paperwork relatively easy to follow. Make the effort to reduce another potential financial burden on your constituents. Thanks to Bill's motivation and interest in the NFIP his communities will have better protection.

Contact Steve Samuelson at 785-296-4622 or email to Steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov for assistance with enrollment in the NFIP.

Photo of Healy the day after the flash flood.



Training Opportunities

The Floodplain Management Program will host the following training sessions throughout Kansas. If you are interested in any of the no-cost training opportunities, please contact Tom Morey at 785-296-5440 or Steve Samuelson at 785-296-4622. A training registration form is included in this newsletter.

Post Flood Responsibilities

This free class is intended for community officials responsible for administering floodplain management regulations. The course focuses on what to do during and after a disaster event. Topics include substantial damage, permitting, Increased Cost of Compliance and violations. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Wamego – Feb. 19, 2015 8:30a.m. – 12:30p.m.

Substantial Damage Estimator Overview

This free class is designed for community officials responsible for administering floodplain management regulations and those who perform damage estimations after a disaster. Class will look at the damage estimating software and how it works. There will be a walk through of a house to practice damage estimates. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Emporia – March 4, 2015 8:30a.m. – 12:30p.m.

Basics of the National Flood Insurance Program

This class is for officials responsible for administering their local floodplain management ordinance. The focus is on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and concepts of floodplain management, maps and studies, ordinance administration, and the relationship between floodplain management and flood insurance. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Iola – March 12, 2015 8:30a.m. – 12:30p.m.

Find more information about floodplain management from Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources on line at:
<http://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain>

Email saves money on postage. The electronic newsletter also has links and the photos are in color. If you are getting this newsletter by postal mail and would prefer email please contact Steve Samuelson at steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov.

Mark your calendar. The Kansas Association for Floodplain Management 2015 conference will be September 2 and 3 in Kansas City. More information will be posted at the website: www.kafm.org. Registration will be done through a link on the website. If you have questions about registration please contact Don Slone, Chairman, at 913-667-1708.

Needing books from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)? Call the FEMA Publications Warehouse and request any books or brochures from the FEMA Library. The toll free number to call is 1-800-480-2520.

Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources
Floodplain Program
Training Registration Form

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Name, date and location of training you will attend _____

*Please share this invitation with anyone else who could benefit from the training.

**Classroom address locations will be sent to registered participants one week before the training.

Please mail or fax your registration to:

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

6531 SE Forbes Ave., Suite B

Topeka, KS 66619

Fax to: 785-862-9110

For questions about training, please contact Steve Samuelson by email at steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov or by phone 785-296-4622, or contact Tom Morey at tom.morey@kda.ks.gov and 785-296-5440.

Please help us keep our records current. In the case that the name that appears on this newsletter is for an individual no longer with your organization, please call 785-296-4622, or email steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov to report the change.

046-17
Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources
Topeka Field Office
Floodplain Management Team
6531 SE Forbes Ave., Suite B
Topeka, KS 66619

ASFPM 2015 National Conference in Atlanta

The 2015 Association of State Floodplain Managers National Conference will be May 31 to June 5, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia. This conference is an excellent opportunity for floodplain managers to receive training on mapping technologies, regulations, permitting, outreach and best practices. It is estimated the conference will be attended by more than 1,000 floodplain management professionals. This conference is great chance to meet people for networking and to learn the latest news in floodplain management.

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<http://www.agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain>