



FEMA

Medical Clinic Moved From Danger Annual Floods Do Not Reach New Clinic

Drayton, ND - North Dakota's historic 1997 Red River Valley flood nearly spelled doom for one small-town medical clinic.

Inside the building, flood waters rose to six inches. A thick layer of mud covered the floor and mold had begun to grow. Despite efforts to clean and disinfect the building, the medical staff thought the health risk for patients was too high to treat them inside the building. Instead, the staff treated patients in their cars.

Floods are a regular occurrence in Drayton, a small city with a population of 900. It faces a flood threat practically every year.

The clinic building, which also housed a local dentist, was at risk to flood again and again, even though it sat 35 feet above the normal river level. The river last reached the clinic's crawl space in the spring of 1999. It was the tenth recorded flood since 1980 alone.

To make matters worse, the riverbank had become increasingly unstable due to erosion from repetitive flooding. Because of this, there was not enough stability behind the clinic to build an emergency dike. Some thought it was only a matter of time before the weight of the building would cause the ground to collapse, sending the clinic tumbling toward the river.

Residents and city officials felt something had to be done. The city's hospital closed in 1975 and the clinic was the only local medical facility available to residents. They knew they needed money to pay for a new building that was better protected from flooding. Through a public-private partnership, they received everything they asked for.

A financial package that included a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Administration, proceeds from the National Flood Insurance Program and donations from local organizations led to the purchase and remodeling of another building on the edge of town.

Since July 1999, the clinic has been operating from a larger, newly remodeled facility about a half-mile from the structure's original location on Main Street. Due to the recent disaster-resistant measures, the chances of the facility being damaged again are greatly reduced. It is also likely the clinic can remain open for patient care, even if flooding threatens other areas of the city.



**Pembina County,
North Dakota**



Quick Facts

Sector:

Public/Private Partnership

Cost:

Amount Not Available

Primary Activity/Project:

Acquisition/Buyouts

Primary Funding:

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)