

Provisionally Accredited Levees

Mapping Scenarios for Procedure Memorandum No. 43

LEVEES
IDENTIFYING
THE RISK
ZONE X

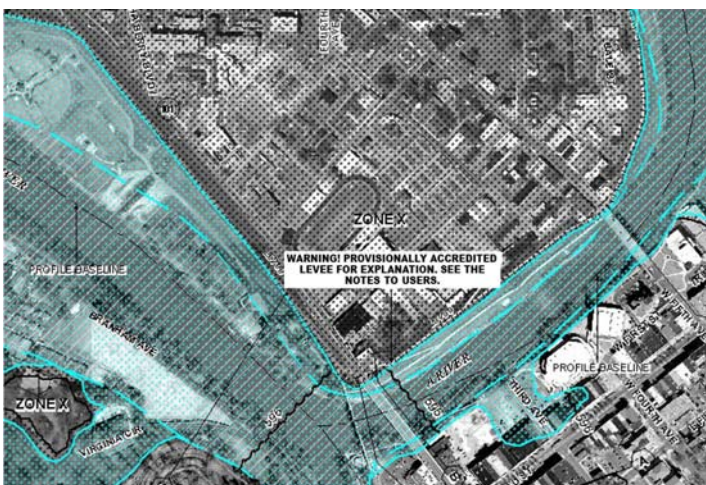
The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has implemented procedures to verify that levees currently depicted on effective National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) flood maps as providing protection from the 1-percent-annual-chance flood continue to meet the current NFIP levee criteria. As part of its Flood Map Modernization effort, FEMA has issued two Procedure Memorandums—Procedure Memorandum No. 34 (PM 34) and Procedure Memorandum No. 43—to clarify the evaluation and mapping requirements for areas protected by levees. You may view these memorandums on FEMA's Web site at www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/lv_fpm.shtm.

PM 34—*Interim Guidance for Studies Including Levees*— issued on August 22, 2005, helps clarify the responsibility of community officials or other parties seeking recognition of a levee in providing information on levees identified during a study/mapping project. PM 34 clarifies procedures to minimize delays in near-term study/mapping projects and to aid FEMA mapping partners in properly assessing how to handle levee mapping issues.

PM 43—*Guidelines for Identifying Provisionally Accredited Levees*— describes five scenarios for determining when a levee qualifies for a Provisionally Accredited Levee, or PAL, designation. FEMA will designate a levee as a PAL when there is sufficient evidence to conditionally show that a levee will provide 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection. Before it will designate a levee as a PAL, the community or levee owner will need to sign and return an agreement that indicates the full documentation required for compliance with Title 44, Chapter 1, Section 65.10 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR Section 65.10) will be provided within 24 months of date of the signed agreement. If the signed agreement is not returned to FEMA within 90 days, levees in the community are no longer eligible for the PAL designation. If the levee does not meet the PAL requirements, the area landward of the levee will be remapped as Zone AE or Zone A (high-risk flood zones) depending on the type of study performed for the area.

FEMA's mapping requirements are designed to provide the people and property behind the levee protection from the 1-percent-annual-chance flood. The regulatory requirements for FEMA to recognize levees are found in Section 65.10, which you may view on FEMA's Web site at www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/lv_intro.shtm. PMs 34 and 43 were issued as clarification of the requirements in Appendix H of *Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners*.

It is also important to note that levees are designed to provide a *specific level of protection*. They can be overtopped or even fail in larger flood events. Everyone should understand the risk to life and property that resides behind levees—risk that even the best flood-control system cannot completely eliminate.



DFIRM with PAL (Scenarios A and B)



DFIRM with Zone A (Scenarios C, D, and E)



The table below shows the possible scenarios outlined in PM 43.

Scenario	Criteria	PAL	Federal System	Current Map Shows Protection is Provided	Section 65.10 Documentation Needed	Who Notifies Levee Owner/Community/Local Project Sponsor
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levees are not in the USACE Federal System (non-Federal levees), but are shown on the effective FIRM as providing 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection. 	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	FEMA Regional Office
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effective FIRM shows the levee as providing 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection; No available information indicates the levee does not provide 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection; and The project inspection rating is within an acceptable range (as defined by USACE). 	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	FEMA Regional Office
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effective FIRM shows the levee as providing 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection; Levee for which the USACE has determined that the levee's recent inspection ratings are listed as Fair, Poor, or Unacceptable; and Levee for which the USACE has determined the project status in the Rehabilitation and Inspection Program has been switched from active to inactive. 	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	USACE, FEMA Regional Office
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levee in the USACE Federal System that is <u>not</u> shown as providing 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection on the FIRM. 	No	Yes	No	No	—
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levee that is shown on the FIRM as providing 1-percent-annual-chance flood protection but does not provide an adequate level of protection as indicated by the USACE levee inventory data and validated through coordination between the USACE district office and FEMA Regional Office; Levee inspection rating is NOT listed as Fair, Poor, or Unacceptable, but the levee may have failed or experienced overtopping by less than 1-percent-annual-chance flood event; and Local project sponsor has NOT received a letter from USACE identifying the known maintenance deficiencies with the levee. 	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	FEMA Regional Office