



FEMA

# EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BULLETIN

Week of May 26, 2014

## Important Dates and Deadlines:

[National Hurricane Preparedness Week](#)  
(May 25-31, 2014)

[FEMA Individual and Community  
Preparedness Awards](#)  
(Due May 30, 2014)

[National Dam Safety Awareness Day](#)  
(May 31, 2014)

### National Hurricane Preparedness Week

FEMA is partnering with NOAA for [National Hurricane Preparedness Week](#), which begins on May 25 and extends through May 31. The week highlights the importance of planning ahead to protect families and secure homes and communities in advance of the upcoming Atlantic hurricane season, which lasts from June 1 to November 30.

FEMA calls upon all Americans to take action this hurricane season, which begins by knowing your risk, preparing yourself and your family, and taking the appropriate actions to prepare you for what to do if a hurricane were approaching. FEMA encourages families, individuals, communities and businesses to take action to join [America's PrepareAthon!](#), a national community-based campaign for action to increase emergency preparedness and resilience. More than ever, it takes the whole community's participation to build resiliency. FEMA encourages everyone to prepare now and know what to do before, during and after a hurricane makes landfall.

Being prepared can help build stronger, safer and more resilient communities. Practicing what to do in an emergency in advance of the event can make a difference in the ability to take immediate and informed action, which, in turn, enables a quicker recovery. More information about preparing for hurricanes can be found at [www.ready.gov/hurricanes](http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes). For daily updates during National Hurricane Preparedness Week, visit [www.twitter.com/readygov](http://www.twitter.com/readygov) and [www.facebook.com/readygov](http://www.facebook.com/readygov). A [digital engagement toolkit](#) is available.

FEMA's Office of External Affairs provides this bulletin to highlight recent and upcoming program and policy activities and announcements.

Feedback is welcome at  
[fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov).

### Open Joint Field Offices

AK, AL, AR, CO, FL, GA, IN, MD, MS,  
MT, NC, NM, OR, SC, TN, VT, WA, WV  
[Learn more.](#)

### National Building Safety Month

Building Safety Month is a month-long celebration of all aspects of building safety that helps families, employers and leaders understand and recognize the best practices that keep the places where we live, work and play safe.  
[Learn more.](#)

### Seeking Input on Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance

In January 2013, the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act (SRIA) provided federally recognized Indian tribal governments (tribal governments) the option to request a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration independently of a state. To implement this historic provision, FEMA initiated a second round of consultation on the working draft of the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance with tribal governments, conducting working meetings across the country to collect comments and feedback from tribal governments.

Comments on the working draft of the [Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance](#) can be sent to [tribalconsultation@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:tribalconsultation@fema.dhs.gov). More information about this consultation, including upcoming dates, is available at [www.fema.gov/tribal](http://www.fema.gov/tribal).

Questions can be directed to FEMA's Intergovernmental Affairs Division at (202) 646-3444 or [FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov).

### "Designing for Disaster" at the National Building Museum

The National Building Museum recently opened a multimedia exhibition titled "Designing for Disaster," a call-to-action for citizen preparedness – from design professionals and local decision-makers to homeowners and school kids. FEMA proudly supports the "Designing for Disaster" exhibit as it explores strategies that communities are using to reduce their risks and build more disaster-resilient communities. The exhibit is open until August 2, 2015 in Washington, D.C.

Visitors to "Designing for Disaster" will explore new approaches in design and engineering to protect life and property against a range of natural hazards. The exhibition is organized by the destructive forces associated with each of the elements: earth, air, fire and water. Artifacts from past disasters, such as a door marked after Hurricane Katrina, singed opera glasses from the Waldo Canyon wildfire and stone fragments from the earthquake-damaged National Cathedral, express the destructive power of nature. Multimedia components include expert profiles, interviews with industry leaders and powerful films like the testing video from the Insurance Industry for Business and Home Safety Research Center in Richburg, South Carolina, where experts test the effect of gale-force winds on residential structures.

To learn more about the "Designing for Disaster" exhibit, please visit the [National Building Museum](#) website. For more information on how to plan, prepare, and mitigate your community's hazard risk, please visit [www.fema.gov/plan-prepare-mitigate](http://www.fema.gov/plan-prepare-mitigate). For more information on FEMA's Building Science Branch guidance on creating disaster-resilient communities, visit [www.fema.gov/building-sciences](http://www.fema.gov/building-sciences).

This bulletin is not intended to provide a comprehensive list of policies that are open for public comment, nor does it describe all of the instructions or requirements necessary to submit a comment. For a complete list of instructions and deadlines please click the hyperlinks included. FEMA does not endorse any non-government organizations, entities or services.

## National Dam Safety Awareness Day

National Dam Safety Awareness Day, May 31, is an event that remembers the tragic failure of the South Fork Dam in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. On May 31, 1889, the dam failure resulted in the loss of more than 2,200 lives and was the worst dam failure in the history of the United States. To commemorate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Johnstown flood, the Johnstown Heritage Association, National Park Service, and the Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) are working with FEMA to host [a series of special events](#) in Johnstown.

For over 30 years, the FEMA-led National Dam Safety Program has been working to reduce the impact of dam failures. National Dam Safety Awareness Day encourages and promotes individual and community responsibility as well as best practices for dam safety. It also highlights the steps people can take to prevent future catastrophic dam failures or lessen the impact of a potential failure. FEMA encourages all communities to promote the benefits that dams can offer during this time of the year.

Dams provide vital benefits, including flood protection, water supply, hydropower, irrigation and recreation. They are owned and operated by different types of owners ranging from a neighborhood associations built around a lake to water supply utilities and serve a variety of purposes. The failure of even a small dam is capable of causing significant property and environmental damage as well as loss of life. If dams are not maintained and operated correctly, dams can pose risks to those living downstream. When dams age, deteriorate or malfunction, they can release sudden and dangerous flood flows.

Reducing the risk of failure and ensuring that the public and property owners downstream of dams are informed of the risk of dam failure are the driving forces of the National Dam Safety Program. The National Dam Safety Program has a variety of resources available for communities downstream from dams at [www.damsafety.org](http://www.damsafety.org).

There will be [live video available online](#) of the Johnstown events on **May 31 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. EDT**.

## National Building Safety Month: How a City Leads in Floodplain Management

Anna Maria, a small island city on Florida's west coast, is a leader in floodplain management. Earlier this year the city revised its regulations by adopting the state's code-coordinated floodplain management ordinance along with several amendments to the Florida Building Code. With nearly 1,200 flood insurance policies, the city has achieved Class 5 in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS), the highest class possible. They are one of only 66 communities nationwide to reach that level. Some of the city's higher standards that contribute to its CRS classification include several requirements that exceed minimum requirements of the NFIP and the Florida Building Code include:

- Buildings are required to be elevated to at least two feet above the base elevation, with higher requirements for critical facilities.
- FEMA's Elevation Certificate is explicitly required, and applications for dwellings must include non-conversion agreements to livable space if there are enclosures below the lowest floor.
- There cannot be any enclosures below an elevated building that is more than 50 percent of a building's footprint.
- All new buildings are to be landward of the erosion setback line, which is defined as 50 feet from mean high tide line of the Gulf of Mexico waters.
- Substantial Improvement is further defined to specify accumulation of costs of improvements and repairs over a one year period.
- Substantial Damage is further defined to include "repetitive loss" to qualify for the NFIP's Increased Cost of Compliance insurance coverage.

## FINAL REMINDER: 2014 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards Application Period Still Open

FEMA announced that the application period for the 2014 Individual and Community Preparedness Awards is now open. The awards highlight innovative local practices and achievements by recognizing individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions toward making their communities safer, stronger, better prepared, and more resilient.

To be considered for this year's awards, all submissions must be received by **May 30, 2014 at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Please visit [www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards](http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/citizen-corps-awards) for more information about the awards and instructions for submitting an application.

The mission of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) is to engage, inform, and educate all of FEMA's stakeholders in support of the Agency's programs and initiatives to achieve its mission. OEA accomplishes its mission by coordinating and maintaining visibility of public and internal communications; advising FEMA program and support offices on decision-making regarding policies, plans, and actions that affect stakeholder, media, and Congressional audiences; and organizing outreach efforts targeted at principal stakeholders to include local, state, territorial, and tribal governments, the private sector, national organizations and associations, and the American public.



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