



A Word Cloud based on R6 Mitigation homepage, created in Wordle

KEEPING CURRENT

FEMA REGION 6 MITIGATION

Contents:

- ⇒ NFIP Call Center Celebrates 1 Year of Successful Customer Service
- ⇒ Take Your Sons and Daughters to Work Day
- ⇒ Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Funding Information
- ⇒ Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Funding Information
- ⇒ Flood Insurance Manual Update
- ⇒ Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS)
- ⇒ Flood Mapping Mail Box
- ⇒ Partners Profiles
 - ⇒ Mike Segner, TX NFIP Coordinator
 - ⇒ Cindy Wirz, R6 Community Education and Outreach
- ⇒ Coming Soon: FEMA Publication 1 Update
- ⇒ Best Practices:
 - ⇒ Mapping Risks and Vulnerabilities to Increase Resilience Planning
 - ⇒ Elevated Home along Arkansas River Survives Christmas, 2015 Flood
- ⇒ Arkansas State University Teaches Students Readiness
- ⇒ Hurricane Season is Here! Are you Ready? Resources for you and to share
- ⇒ Preparing for Hurricane Season
- ⇒ Coastal Barrier Resources System - Getting Coastal Areas Ready for Hurricane Season
- ⇒ HAZUS Training for Texas
- ⇒ Contact for Building Sciences
- ⇒ Homeowner's Guide to Prepare for Natural Hazards
- ⇒ Training Opportunities
 - ⇒ Emergency Management Institute
 - ⇒ State Specific Training Opportunities
- ⇒ Useful Web Pages
- ⇒ Disaster Web Pages

Keefe's Corner

Hurricane Season is here and we are all still recovering from the Spring flooding events! So have you had time to get ready? If not, please do so, and know that we have included some handy preparedness information in this issue for your use!



June is also a month to celebrate! It has been one year since the National Flood Insurance Program Helpline was began as a pilot program! It has expanded from responding to a Texas disaster as originally designed and has answered calls from across the country. In this issue we highlight some of the staff and the success of this initiative.

We have mixed in some grants information, FFRMS, the Flood Insurance Manual update, and sprinkled in a bit of the National Disaster Recovery System, best practices and information on the Coastal Barrier Resource System to give you well rounded view of the mitigation world.

We also bid farewell to Melissa Wise, HMA Branch Chief. She is leaving FEMA to take a position with the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington State. Join me in wishing her well on her next adventure!

We also included our traditional spotlights on our partners both internal and external as well as a list of available trainings.

Thank you for your partnership! The staff and I stand ready to help you in any way we can to further the Mitigation Mission!

Respectfully,
Sandy Keefe
Division Director
FEMA R6 Mitigation



NFIP Call Center Celebrates 1 Year of Successful Customer Service and Positive Employee Experiences!

After Hurricane Sandy, FEMA recognized a need to enhance the customer service experience of NFIP policyholders. To address this issue one solution was determined to be stand up a pilot program for a National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Call Center staffed with subject matter experts and employees trained in the nuances of the NFIP. This effort required the availability of skilled staff who could work with survivors over the phone. A natural fit is the staff and resources within the National Processing Service Center (NPSC). Developed to handle a large volume of calls, physically arranged to be conducive to a team setting, and with an availability of staff, the Texas NPSC became the ideal setting for this initiative.

Implemented after flooding began in Texas on May 4, 2015 resulting in Major Disaster Declaration #4223 on May 29, 2015, this has proven to be a reasonable and practical solution to meet the needs of NFIP customers. Once a public campaign started to advertise this service, calls began coming in from as far away as New York. Staff discovered customers appreciated the “one on one service and were grateful for the instant responses,” stated Janell Daleske, National Processing Service Center (NPSC) Human Services.

Since “opening” the NFIP Call Center, staff have answered over 45,000 calls through 1-800-621-3362 (FEMA), Option #2.

Calls are triaged and based on their complexity, are sorted as Tier 1, being the most basic issue, to Tier 3, being the most complex requiring the direct involvement of a subject matter expert.

An unexpected bonus is the staff satisfaction. NPSC staff, IM Cores, and Reservists received training on the NFIP processes. “Every day we learn something new! I now have confidence in my NFIP knowledge, how to look for, and find maps for callers so I can provide better information for those who call in,” Ben Torres, NPSC Human Services.

Reservists, and IM Cores, rotate through the NFIP Call Center every 120 days and provide additional support. While that might seem to cause an issue, extensive training, ongoing mentoring, and availability of subject matter experts allows for rapid transition.



This training creates a confident staff. “We are able to work with callers, provide them an answer, and it’s a full circle without passing the call on,” states Diane Hoff, NPSC Human Services, “and that’s a wonderful feeling!”

The NFIP Call Center has “helped insurance carriers, mortgage brokers, lenders, real estate agents, floodplain administrators, land surveyors, and engineers, providing information on flood risks, flood zones, and even how to use the FEMA Map Service Center,” states Diana Espino, NPSC Human Services.

This initiative has moved beyond its original scope to become a “great concept for FEMA to use to deliver consistent customer service,” states Charlie Jackson. More than that, it has become a tool for Reservists, Program Specialists, and other internal partners to ask questions about the NFIP while in the field.

NFIP Call Center Celebrates 1 Year of Successful Customer Service and Positive Employee Experiences! Continued from Page 2

For some staff they are able “to take this learning back to the field and are comfortable answering questions from survivors,” stated Aldolphus Chambliss, Community Education and Outreach Specialist for Mitigation.

Like a pebble in a pond, the NFIP Call Center has had a ripple effect throughout the Agency with multiple stakeholders benefiting from the effort: survivors, private sector, FEMA Staff and others. This “Best Practice” should continue because the benefits are clearly measurable in satisfaction by all who either work or call in to the NFIP Call Center.



Take Your Sons and Daughters To Work!

This year Mitigation was an integral part of the effort to teach the children of our staff what exactly we, FEMA, do! So in the spirit of Turn Around Don't Drown we had a poster contest! Here are our winners being recognized by Regional Administrator Tony Robinson. These three posters will hang in the Regional Office until next year and all of the others will be on prominent display in the Mitigation Division! Next year maybe we can make a calendar!!

1st Place
Julia Boes
Mom's a Mitigator



2nd Place
Sydney Kirton
Mom's in Response



3rd Place
Peyton Baxter
Aunt's in Mission Response



**THE APPLICATION PERIOD IS OPEN FOR
FLOOD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (FMA) AND PRE-DISASTER
MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (PDM) GRANTS**

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA):

Makes available Federal funds to State, Local, and Tribal Governments to reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings and structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

To view the FMA Factsheet: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/114663>

Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM):

Makes Federal funds available to State, Local and Tribal governments to implement and sustain cost-effective measures designed to reduce the risk to individuals and property from natural hazards, while also reducing reliance on Federal funding from future disasters. PDM program strengthens National Preparedness and Resilience and supports the national preparedness goal of mitigation, as specified in the Presidential Policy Directive (PPD-8).

To view the PDM Factsheet: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/114667>

To learn more visit: <http://www.grants.gov/search-grants.html?agencies%3DDHS%7CDepartment%20of%20Homeland%20Security>.

Have additional questions? Please speak with one of our Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA), Non-Disaster Grant Specialists:

Marty Chester, 940-898-5216, Marty.Chester@fema.dhs.gov - Responsible for AR and TX

Trey Rozelle, 940-898-5412, Trey.Rozelle@fema.dhs.gov - Responsible for LA, NM, and OK

Flood Insurance Manual has been Updated

FEMA has revised the NFIP Flood Insurance Manual with program changes that became effective April 1, 2016. Significant revisions include the following:

- Further guidance for determining building occupancy (GR, APP, PRP, and NM Sections).
- Revised definition for business buildings (GR, APP, PRP, NM, and DEF Sections).
- Clarifications to Reduction of Coverage Limits or Reformation (GR and MPPP Sections).
- Additional instructions for NFIP application forms (APP, PRP, NM, and END Sections).
- Revised rates and premium tables for policies written or renewed on or after April 1, 2016 (RATE, CONDO, PRP, and NM Sections).
- Increase to the Federal Policy Fee for all policies and increase to the Reserve Fund Assessment for Preferred Risk Policies (RATE, CONDO, PRP, and NM Sections).
- Guidance on the elimination of subsidies for certain Pre-FIRM properties with policies that lapse and are reinstated (RATE and CONDO Sections).
- Additional instructions for Pre-FIRM buildings that have been substantially improved on or after April 1, 2015 (APP, RATE, and CONDO Sections).

Continued on Page 5

Flood Insurance Manual Update, Cont. from Page 4

- Updated Lowest Floor Guide to include new Building Diagram 2B (LFG Section).
- Updated Elevation Certificate and Non-Residential Floodproofing Certificate (CERT Section).
- New base premium tables, rating methodology, and premium calculations for PRP and Newly-Mapped-rated policies written or renewed on or after April 1, 2016 (PRP and NM).
- Additional instructions for properties ineligible for the Newly Mapped procedure and for renewals (NM Section).
- Revised claims section to outline key aspects of the claims process (CL Section).
- Reformatted policy forms (Policy Section).
- Additional clarifications for the Cancellation/Nullification rules (CN Section).
- Updates to the Community Rating System Eligible Communities list (CRS Section).
- Updates to the Definitions, Table of Contents, and Index.

Additional information is available at: <http://nfpiservice.com/Stakeholder/FEMA7/ATTACHMENT%20A%20-%20Summary%20of%20the%20NFIP%20April%202016%20Program%20Changes%20final.pdf>

To print a copy go to: <http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/115549>

Update on Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS)

FEMA's goal is to fully implement EO 11988, as amended by EO 13690 by November 2017. Leadership intends to establish Agency-wide procedures to implement FFRMS which will include the following approaches:

- **Non-Critical Action**
 - FEMA will use the Freeboard approach (Base Flood Elevation (BFE) + 2 feet) of the FFRMS
- **Critical Actions**
 - At a minimum FEMA will select the Freeboard approach (BFE + 3 feet) of the FFRMS.
 - If climate informed science approach indicates a flood elevation higher than the minimum Freeboard elevation, FEMA will accept the higher elevation as the FFRMS elevation.

FEMA intends to revise the agency's implementing regulations for Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands, 44 C.F.R. Part 9, and to develop a new accompanying policy which will establish how FEMA will implement the EO 13690 amendments and the FFRMS. FEMA will publish both the proposed rule and draft policy in the Federal Register to provide an opportunity for public notice and comment on the recommended framework for implementing the FFRMS.

FEMA will not implement EO 11988 as amended by EO 13690 and the FFRMS until a final rule revising FEMA's Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands regulations and a final policy are published. Once FEMA implements the revised regulations and policy, they will apply to new actions that are in or impact the floodplain.

To keep up with changes visit: <https://www.fema.gov/federal-flood-risk-management-standard-ffrms>

Flood Mapping Mail Box—Helping Our Internal Partners

On August 21, 2015, FEMA issued a memorandum providing guidance on using best available flood hazard information in areas effected by DR-4223-TX. This guidance requires FEMA to evaluate all available data sources in order to determine which source provides the "best available" flood hazard information. In turn, the "best available" flood hazard information then serves as the basis for the standards that govern construction and repair, the elevation of structures, and other FEMA-funded actions in a floodplain.

The Floodplain Mapping Mailbox (FMM) was developed in response and serves as a unified approach to floodplain compliance spanning multiple programs; resulting in expedited project reviews and funding.

The FMM has proven to streamline the project review process by ensuring: 1.) Use of the best available flood hazard information throughout the disaster; 2.) Production of accurate flood maps; and 3.) Informed decision making whenever location within the floodplain is the only practicable alternative. This effort has unified FEMA's decision-making processes; continues to promote the overarching goal of risk management by properly identifying and addressing floodplain risk early on in the project-planning phase. The mailbox allows Region 6 to enhance the process through which Mitigation serves the public and advances the key aims of EHP, NFIP, PA, and HMA.

To date, the Floodplain Mapping Mailbox Team have serviced over 3,500 customer requests. Mailbox usage continues to grow exponentially. As a result of this success, the pilot mailbox has been extended to additional Texas disasters. Moving forward, Region 6's Mitigation leadership seek to build a similar product that can be applied regionally, which will help to strengthen the floodplain review process; posturing the Region for future changes associated with major Federal initiatives such as the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard.

Do you have questions about the Flood Mapping Mailbox? Contact Ms. Sarah Carrino, 904-297-0133, or email her at Sarah.Carrino@fema.dhs.gov

Coming Soon: The Second Edition of FEMA Publication 1

The Office of Policy, Program Analysis and International Affairs will soon release the second edition of FEMA Publication 1 (Pub 1).

Pub 1 communicates what FEMA is, what we do, and how we can better accomplish our missions. It also defines our principles and culture, and describes our history, mission, purpose, and ethos. Pub 1's themes and principles guide all FEMA activities at all times, and serve as a lens for FEMA employees to use in examining situations and making decisions that are in the best interests of the American people.

This update to Pub 1 includes:

- A new principle of accessibility and a focus on providing services for survivors of all ages, with and without disabilities, and survivors across all socio-economic groups, languages, and cultures;
- Programmatic updates to reflect FEMA's current programs and structures;
- An increased focus on the role of the whole community; and
- A description of recent Stafford and non-Stafford Act events, such as Hurricane Sandy and the response to the influx of Unaccompanied Children.

Partner Profiles - State and Federal Staff answer three questions:**Mike Segner, National Flood Insurance Program, State Coordinator for Texas****How did you get involved with Mitigation?**

I came into this position through luck and the desire to serve. After serving in Iraq, I thought it might be difficult to find a job that actually made a difference in someone's life; thankfully, I was hired by the Texas Water Development Board. During my initial time here, I sat next to and became very good friends with the previous National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) state coordinator, Mike Howard. As the business manager, I helped his Flood Mitigation Planning group with different aspects and became interested in what they did for the citizens of Texas. Mike invited me to the FEMA Joint Field Office after Hurricane Ike hit in 2008, and I was amazed by how so many agencies interacted and how everyone was trying to assist those affected by such a devastating event. When Mike left the Texas Water Development Board, I was able to step into the role of state coordinator and have felt very fortunate to do so.

**What do you consider the favorite part of your job?**

There are so many great aspects to this job, but my favorite and most rewarding part is making Texas a safer place. This can be a challenging job at times—for example, talking with a homeowner who lost everything due to a flood or was informed that they are now in a flood zone and the insurance will be more costly—but it is the positive aspects of the job that keep me going. Hearing the success stories of the homeowner who did not initially want to elevate and then was thankful he did when the next flood event occurred is always something that makes me smile.

**If you had unlimited money, unlimited power, and complete support, what is one thing you would do for the citizens of Texas and why?**

Not to sound predictable, but I would ensure that 100 percent of Texas properties would be evaluated for all potential flood hazards and proper mitigation actions would be implemented. My own house had to be restored due to a broken water fitting. There were less than three inches of clean water in my house, but it took an amazing amount of money, time, and effort to get it back to normal. I cannot imagine the misery and suffering that people affected by floods, hurricanes, or other natural events must go through. If there were any way I could minimize that, I would.

Cindy Wirz - Community Education and Outreach Specialist**How did you get involved with Mitigation?**

I was in External Affairs for R6 FEMA and assigned to work with Mitigation. I had no clue what Mitigation was, how it worked, why it was important, and how in the world to talk about it! After being around Mitigation and understanding that only through Mitigation can we lessen the impacts of disaster, I became a true believer! Then I got on with the Mitigation Division as soon as possible!

What do you consider the favorite part of your job?

Working with young people and seeing the "a-ha" moment! It's fun with adults too but it's really the kids that are the coolest! After all, in the words of Whitney Houston, "the children are our future!"

**If you had unlimited money, unlimited power, and complete support, what is one thing you would do for the citizens of Region 6 and why?**

First, World Peace! Second, create a massive outreach campaign to include but not limited to social media, partner outreach, products, and go out to the people to talk about risk and flood insurance!!!

When folks can visualize and in some cases, sadly, experience flooding first hand, do they understand the value of investing in flood insurance! At the same time I would take this campaign to the builders and encourage elevation as well as hardening of homes. In general help R6 Residents to build/repair safer and stronger then have the proper insurance against flood. All in the hopes of shortening the recovery time after a disaster.

Best Practice from South Carolina

Mapping Risks and Vulnerabilities to Increase Resilience Planning

Columbia, SC: As we learn more about the dynamic arena of disaster preparedness, the realities of just how little we understand about the potential hazards we face reveal a need for increased focus on the educational front of this evolving field. The University of South Carolina's (USC) Hazards & Vulnerability Research Institute (HVRI) is working to advance theories and promote practical uses of geospatial mapping and analysis. They strive to develop and maintain powerful analytical tools with the purpose of planning for – and protecting against – potential disasters.

“It could be argued that 100% of the United States is potentially hazardous, for different reasons in different places,” said Dr. Christopher Emrich, Ph.D., Associate Director for the Institute, who has been involved from its early days. “Understanding these hazardous elements in context with where people live, work and worship provides the basis for making smart planning decisions, so that whether you're putting boots on the ground, shovels into the earth, or elevating structures, you're making these choices with a full understanding of all the existing vulnerabilities across a landscape. Understanding these hazards really helps planners make smart decisions.”

To qualify for certain forms of assistance in the wake of a presidentially declared disaster, communities must have an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) on file. Part of the requirements of such a plan involves identifying the hazard risks present within a community and formulating strategies to deal with such threats. Many of the tools the HVRI has created, or is in the process of developing, are useful to those communities that are lacking the resources or capabilities to gather that data themselves. The Integrated Hazards Assessment Tool (IHAT), for example, provides a simple-to-use, online resource for South Carolina communities to create and print out customizable maps. These maps can display data such as population features, hazard frequencies and associated loss statistics, threatened areas, and critical facilities. These maps can be included in the community's HMP, which significantly reduces the amount of time and resources that community must allocate to the risk assessment portion of the planning process.

The brainchild of Director Susan Cutter, Ph.D., a Carolina Distinguished Professor, the HVRI arose from what started as the Hazards Research Lab, or simply “The Lab,” in the basement of USC's Geography department in the mid-1990s. When the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences recognized the exceptional work the Lab was producing, they requested the creation of a center devoted to GIS mapping. Dr. Cutter took the opportunity to leverage the college's interest into the formation of a larger institute with a broader focus; in 2006, the HVRI was born.

Since the Lab's early days, Institute faculty have maintained a close association with South Carolina's Emergency Management Division (SCEMD). “We've had a long relationship with the SCEMD,” said Dr. Emrich. “Historically there haven't been many presidentially declared disasters in South Carolina, which is where a great deal of the money to fund mitigation response and recovery activities comes from, but there have always been disasters. We thought we could help those communities that don't have the resources to perform GIS-related activities for whatever reason.”

One of the first tools created by the HVRI that is beginning to take on more widespread use is the Social Vulnerability Index, or SoVI, which is a program that utilizes a comprehensive metric to analyze a community's socio-economic vulnerability to potential disasters. Based on 29 criteria (economic status, social demographics, housing types, occupations, etc.), SoVI can assist in identifying a community's capacity to prepare for, respond to, or rebound from environmental threats, allowing for a more focused strategy. NOAA's Coastal Services Center contracted with the HVRI to update SoVI to include all 30 coastal states at the census tract-level and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun to use the program to identify social impacts from flooding.

Though the primary emphasis of the HVRI's efforts is oriented towards the State of South Carolina and its counties and residents, they often collaborate with other state and federal agencies and the tools

Best Practice from South Carolina Continued from Page 8

they create are used by numerous organizations. The Spatial Hazards Events and Losses Database for the U.S (SHELDUS), for instance, is used by mitigation planners throughout the country to profile hazards for risk assessments in HMPs. Initiated in 2000, SHELDUS has been recognized by other prominent international entities involved with the collection of hazard loss data (SwissRe, MunichRe & DesInventar) as being a model for such data collection tools. SHELDUS provides statistics on 18 forms of natural and climate-sensitive hazard events covering every county in the continental United States dating back to 1960. Collected data includes event dates, event locations, amounts of property losses, crop losses, injuries and fatalities.

“So, for the past 55 years we can give you a trend line of disaster losses,” said Dr. Emrich. “We can boil that down into a ratio of per capita/per person loss, or a per gross domestic product (GDP) loss. By looking at historical losses, we can start to project potential future losses.”

Funding for the HVRI’s staff and projects is provided almost entirely through grants from various government entities such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA,) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA,) the National Science Foundation (NSF,) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA,) with only a small part of their budget coming from the university itself. In this way, the Institute is able to provide a significant service HVRI staff evaluating collected data (Photograph courtesy of Hazard & Vulnerability Research Institute) to SCEMD without putting any additional financial strain on the State’s resources.

According to Dr. Emrich, at any given time, there are five to twelve graduate level students and another five or six undergrads working on the numerous projects the Institute undertakes. To date, the HVRI has shepherded more than 40 graduate students through its program, with more than 20 of those receiving their Ph.Ds. The Institute’s alumni have gone on to successful careers with various federal agencies, as consultants, or in academia.

Though there have been significant advances over the years in the arena of disaster preparedness and the spreading of the “mitigation gospel,” as Dr. Emrich refers to it, there is still a great deal of work to do. Much emphasis is still placed on the idea of “building back” in the aftermath of any disaster. The HVRI seeks to connect the value of examining prior disaster events, interpreting that historical data, and using those findings to prepare and plan for future disasters.

“I think that there’s a rather large disconnect between research and academia and the real world,” concluded Dr. Emrich. “It’s taken us since 1995 to be as actively involved in emergency management in South Carolina as we are. I love the field I do research in, and I know that pretty much everyone in emergency management feels the same way. We all want to help people, and we each come to the table with our different skills to do that. What we’re doing here (at the HVRI) is one spoke in a much larger wheel that will eventually turn in such a way that it can benefit everyone.”

For more information on HRVI: <http://artsandsciences.sc.edu/geog/hvri/front-page>

For ideas your community might implement: <http://www.fema.gov/mitigation-best-practices-portfolio>

Elevated Home along Arkansas River Survives Christmas, 2015 Flood

Jefferson CO, AR: The Christmas weekend of 2015 is one that many residents in Arkansas will never forget. The holiday began with up to 10 inches of rain on December 24 and Christmas Day was drenched. The downpour finally came to an end on December 26, but not before causing widespread destruction.

Jefferson County was among the hardest hit areas. Hundreds of homes were inundated, roads

Continued on Page 10

Elevated Home along Arkansas River Survives Christmas, 2015 Flood, Continued from Page 9

were washed out and farmlands submerged.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, it was the most extensive and severe flooding event to strike the state since 1990.

John and Kathy Erwin live along the Arkansas River, and were prepared. They had elevated their home above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) as local code required elevating the property at least a foot above the BFE. While other homes in the neighborhood flooded, their home remained dry.

“Now I wish I had gone up another foot,” said John Erwin.

The 5,000-square-foot cedar log home is located approximately 50 feet from the Arkansas River. The house is elevated on a continuous wall using 8”x16” inch cinderblocks. The Erwins finished construction in 2000. “It took me three years to complete the work,” he said.

This flood is a second within a year for the couple. “The river reached 45.96 feet during the spring flooding event of 2015 and 46.96 feet during the Christmas flood,” said Mr. Erwin. This very precise information comes from the hydraulic gauge the couple uses to keep them informed about river conditions. The system is a public service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Watching the torrential rain on Christmas Day, Kathy Erwin read the gauge to discover a flood was eminent. The Erwins’ adult children and other holiday guests cut their celebrations short. All pitched in and began to move items from the garage to higher ground. Then, they evacuated.

When it was over, they could not immediately return home because the road was washed out. When they did return, the Erwins found mud and debris everywhere. The yard was destroyed and the cleanup “was a chore,” but the house remained unscathed, they said.

Additionally, the couple protects their home by participating in the Group Flood Insurance Program, issued by the National Flood Insurance Program. Details are available at <http://www.floodsmart.gov>.

FEMA offers a number of free online resources for home and property owners. To get started, go to: <http://www.fema.gov/safer-stronger-protected-homes-communities> or <http://www.fema.gov/arkansas-disaster-mitigation>.

June 1st & Hurricane Season Starts Today! Are You Ready?

<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

Louisiana Has a Plan: <http://www.getagameplan.org/>

Texas does too: http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/ThreatAwareness/weather_aware_hurricane.htm

Arkansas State University Teaches Students Readiness

In response to growing demand—driven in part by apocalypse-themed television shows and movies—schools across the Nation have started offering classes in disaster preparedness and emergency management.

At Arkansas State University, the Regional Center for Disaster Preparedness Education (<http://www.astate.edu/dpem/>) offers online and classroom-based courses, and training opportunities with professional emergency responders. Sessions focus on actions like responding to chemical and electrical emergencies, providing advanced disaster life support, and performing CPR.

For more colleges and universities offering emergency management and homeland security courses or programs, visit FEMA's website for Higher Education: <https://www.training.fema.gov/hiedu/collegelist/>

Hurricane Season is Here! Are you Ready? Resources for you and to share:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) launched a new feature to its free smartphone app that will enable users to receive push notifications to their devices to remind them to take important steps to prepare their homes and families for disasters. The reminder feature allows users to receive pre-scheduled safety and preparedness tips, including testing smoking alarms, practicing a fire escape plan, updating emergency kits and replacing smoke alarm batteries.

"Our lives are increasingly busy and on-the-go," said Deputy Administrator of Protection and National Preparedness Tim Manning. "Today, we turn to mobile devices and technology to help us stay more organized and connected. This new feature to FEMA's app will make it easier for families to remember to take potentially life-saving actions that we all should be thinking about more often."

"In just two minutes, a home fire can become life-threatening," said U.S. Fire Administrator Ernest Mitchell Jr. "Remembering to take small steps to prepare, such as ensuring your smoke alarm is properly maintained and practicing your home fire escape plan, will reduce fire fatalities and ensure our communities are safer. We hope this new feature to FEMA's app will help save lives by encouraging more families to be prepared."

The new reminder feature builds upon several innovative tools already built into the app. In addition to push notifications, the app also provides a customizable checklist of emergency supplies, maps of open shelters and open recovery centers, and tips on how to survive natural and manmade disasters. The FEMA app also offers a feature that enables users to receive push notifications of weather alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations across the nation.

Some other key features of the app include:

- **Weather Alerts:** Users can elect to receive alerts on severe weather happening in specific areas they select, even if the phone is not located in the area, making it easy to follow severe weather that may be threatening family and friends.
- **Safety Tips:** Tips on how to stay safe before, during, and after over 20 types of hazards, including floods, hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes.

Hurricane Season is Here! Are you Ready? Resources for you and to share, Continued from Page 11

- Disaster Reporter: Users can upload and share disaster-related photos.
- Maps of Disaster Resources: Users can locate and receive driving directions to open shelters and disaster recovery centers.
- Apply for Assistance: The app provides easy access to apply for federal disaster assistance.
- Information in Spanish: The app defaults to Spanish-language content for smartphones that have Spanish set as their default language.

The latest version of the FEMA app is available for free in the App Store (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/fema/id474807486?mt=8>) for Apple devices and Google Play (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.fema.mobile.android>) for Android devices. Users who already have the app downloaded on their device should download the latest update for the reminder alerts feature to take effect. The reminders are available in English and Spanish and are located in the “Prepare” section of the FEMA App.

To learn more, visit: The FEMA App: Helping Your Family Weather the Storm - <https://youtu.be/bxbdhltnuxm>



Preparing for Hurricane Season

The 2016 Hurricane Season begins on June 1. In a Presidential Proclamation, President Obama designated the week of May 15th through the 21st as National Hurricane Preparedness Week and called upon government agencies, private organizations, and residents in hurricane-prone areas to share information about preparedness to help save lives and protect their communities.

In order to increase public awareness of hazards posed by hurricanes and share steps we can all take to become better prepared, FEMA and NOAA are continuing our partnership to support preparedness this week and throughout the entire season.

Continued on Page 13

Preparing for Hurricane Season, Continued From Page 12

In addition to the general public, we want to ensure that federal employees in hurricane-prone areas have the information they need to get ready. We encourage all of our ESF 15 partners to share preparedness resources through their employee networks. Below are some key actions people can take. We also have an online 2016 Hurricane Season Preparedness Digital Toolkit (<https://www.ready.gov/hurricane-toolkit>) that includes resources to aid our partners in spreading the word. Within the toolkit you will find: templates for letters to employees, press releases, and blog posts; key messages; social media tools and sample messages; and resource links, including infographics, videos, and other materials.

What can you do to get ready?

Hurricanes not only affect coastal communities. High winds, heavy rainfall, tornadoes, and flooding can be felt hundreds of miles inland, potentially causing loss of life and catastrophic damage to property. It only takes one to change your life and your community. As Hurricanes Sandy and Isaac remind us, it is not just major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher) that we need to worry about. All hurricanes could potentially cause significant damage. Knowing your risk, getting prepared and staying informed are just a few steps people can take to get ready for hurricane season:

Know Your Risk

Find out today what types of impacts could happen where you live. To search for general information about risks in your area, visit www.ready.gov and search for your state. Check out NOAA's historical hurricane tracks tool for the severity and frequency of past hurricanes in your area.

Get Prepared

Take action now to be prepared for hurricane season. As the storm approaches, it is often too late to get ready. Make sure you have family evacuation and communications plans, update your emergency supply kit, and evaluate your flood insurance needs.

- **Know your zone.** Evacuations are more common than people realize. Make yourself familiar with your community's evacuation zones, so you'll know exactly where to go. Remember: if a hurricane threatens your community and local officials say it's time to evacuate, don't hesitate -- go early.
- **Complete a family communication plan.** Plan how you will assemble your family and loved ones, and anticipate where you will go for different situations. Get together with your family and agree on the ways to contact one another in an emergency, identify meeting locations, and make a Family Emergency Communication Plan (<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/108887>).
- **Check your insurance coverage.** Many states have increased deductibles for hurricanes and not all hurricane-related losses are covered under traditional policies. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage or losses from flooding. Review your policy, ensure you're adequately covered and understand exclusions, and contact your agent for any changes. If you're not insured against flood, talk to your agent or visit www.floodsmart.gov. Renter's insurance policies are also available and should be considered as a way of protecting your belongings.

Stay Informed

- **Know where to go for trusted sources of information during a hurricane event.** NOAA's National Hurricane Center (<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>) and Central Pacific Hurricane Center (<http://www.prh.noaa.gov/cphc/>) are your official sources for hurricane forecasts, watches, and warnings. Sign up for alerts from your local emergency management office: Register your phone and email to receive local emergency notifications, including evacuation orders.
- **Monitor hurricane watches and warnings and follow directions of local officials:** Monitor local news for hurricane watches and warnings in your area and follow directions from local officials. Make sure you have a battery-operated or hand-crank radio available should the power go out.

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA): WEAs are emergency text messages sent by government alerting authorities through your mobile carrier. You do not need to opt-in to receive these messages, they are automatic for any WEA-enabled cell phone. To ensure your device is WEA-capable, check with your service provider.

For additional information, visit www.ready.gov/hurricanes.

Coastal Barrier Resources System - Getting Coastal Areas Ready for Hurricane Season

What is the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS)? The CBRS is a system of protected coastal areas that includes ocean-front land, the Great Lakes and Other Protected Areas (OPAs).

Coastal barriers serve as important buffers between coastal storms and inland areas, often protecting properties on land from serious flood damage. Also, coastal barriers provide a protective habitat for aquatic plants and animals.

The Coastal Barrier Resources Act (COBRA) of 1982 and later amendments, removed the Federal government from financial involvement associated with building and development in undeveloped portions of designated coastal barriers (including the Great Lakes). These areas were mapped and designated as Coastal Barrier Resources System units or "otherwise" protected areas. They are colloquially called COBRA zones. COBRA banned the sale of NFIP flood insurance for structures built or substantially improved on or after a specified date. For the initial COBRA designation, this date is October 1, 1983. For all subsequent designations, this date is the date the COBRA zone was identified. COBRA zones and their identification dates are shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).

Communities may permit development in these areas even though no Federal assistance is available, provided that the development meets NFIP requirements.

For more information visit: <https://www.fema.gov/coastal-barrier-resources-system> or <https://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/faqs/what-is-the-coastal-barrier-resources-system.jsp>

HAZUS Training for Texas

FEMA Region VI developed a technical training session in Austin Texas to the state and local jurisdictions to support increased HAZUS awareness and its application to mitigation planning and other aspects of emergency management. The delivery was focused on two sections.

1. A certified HAZUS-MH for Flood Course L0172 was taught in Austin, TX over 4 days training course that was customized specifically to the state of Texas. In addition to a variety of flood modeling techniques, there was an additional emphasis on Hurricane and the very important component of local building or inventory data to achieve a high level of modeling accuracy. Participants included State, local COGs, highly populated metropolitan areas, and University partners within Texas. It was offered over four consecutive days during which the L0172 Hazus for Floods course and a facilitated discussion session will occur. Throughout the training, there was additional focus on the intersections of HAZUS-MH and Mitigation Planning, the geospatial data coordination challenges of the jurisdiction, and strategies for developing tools and workflows to address those challenges. This was also an opportunity for the participants to increase their HAZUS network and connect them with (professional and data) resources to ease the process of developing their risk assessments and enhance the quality of their results.
2. A 1/2 day customized seminar was conducted towards decision makers, management, and program specialists within FEMA to discuss and facilitate a conversation on how higher analytics can be applied to the various program areas in FEMA. Examples of HAZUS use were illustrated including but not limited to:
 - Overview of and Demonstration of Hazus-MH Capabilities
 - Current and Potential Applications of Hazus-MH
 - Response Initiatives (SAS)
 - Risk MAP
 - Mitigation Plans - Process of rolling products into plans, etc.

HAZUS Training for Texas, Continued from Page 14

- Non Disaster Grants and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) – How it can be utilized to qualify assure grant and used by communities to support grant applications
- Response Plans
- Floodplain Management and Insurance
- Environmental Hazard and Protection (EHP Branch)
- Opportunities for applying Hazus-MH to Recovery Applications

HAZUS continues to be improved upon and has been proven to be a useful tool. To learn more visit <https://www.fema.gov/hazus/> and view success stories, download the software and to get technical assistance. Mark English, GeoSpatial Risk Specialist, is also available if you need technical assistance or if you are interested in learning how you can host a training in your state, Mark.English@fema.dhs.gov or 940-898-5496.

Contact for Building Sciences

The Building Science Branch has established a helpline (phone and email) for questions related to building science issues: (866) 927-2104 or FEMA-BuildingScienceHelp@fema.dhs.gov

Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards

The Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Natural Hazards provides useful tips regarding readiness for natural hazards that may affect Hawaii, including tsunami and hurricanes. The handbook lists local civil defense and emergency management agency information, as well as emergency shelter locations.

While geared toward Hawaii, it is still an excellent resource and a good example of a preparedness document: <http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/homeowners-handbook-prepare-natural-hazards> or http://seagrant.soest.hawaii.edu/sites/default/files/publications/webhomeownershandbooknatural_hazards_0.pdf

Tornadoes, Tornadoes Everywhere!

What are we to do?

<https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes>

Here's what OK is doing:

[https://www.ok.gov/OEM/Programs & Services/Preparedness/Preparedness - Tornadoes.html](https://www.ok.gov/OEM/Programs%20&%20Services/Preparedness/Preparedness%20-%20Tornadoes.html)

Here's what TX advises:

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/Preparedness/tips/tornadoSafetyTips.htm>

Training Opportunities

Are you responsible for writing, training, or testing emergency operations plans for a college or university? We have an interesting course that may be something worth checking out. It's a three day course that covers emergency planning, risk identification, and training and testing plans for your unique environment.

Register now for one of our sessions near you:

June 14-16, 2016 @ Providence College in Providence, RI
June 7-9, 2016 @ West Georgia Technical College in Carrollton, GA
July 12-14, 2016 @ Western Oregon University in Monmouth, OR
July 19-21, 2016 @ Ilisagvik College in Barrow, AK
August 2-14, 2016 @ Marian University of Fond du Lac, WI
August 16-18, 2016 @ Tennessee State University in Nashville, TN
September 13-15, 2016 @ University of Hawaii in Honolulu, HI

For more information and to register, visit: <http://training.fema.gov/hiedu/aemrc/eplanning/l363.aspx>

Emergency Management Institute - <http://www.training.fema.gov/emi.aspx>**July**

E0392: Emergency Management Higher Education Symposium 6/6/2016 6/9/2016 Emmitsburg MD
L0583: Emergency Management Overview for Tribal Leaders 6/8/2016 6/8/2016 Durant OK
E0172: Hazus-MH for Flood 6/20/2016 6/23/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0102: Science for Disasters 6/20/2016 6/22/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0364: Multihazard Emergency Planning for Schools 6/20/2016 6/22/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0360: Planning for Emergencies: What Teachers Need to Know 6/27/2016 6/29/2016 Emmitsburg MD Mitigation
E0273: Managing Floodplain Development thru the NFIP 6/27/2016 6/30/2016 Emmitsburg MD
L0213: Unified Hazard Mitigation Assistance Application Review and Evaluation 6/28/2016 6/29/2016 Arlington TX
E0105: Public Information and Warning 6/29/2016 6/30/2016 Emmitsburg MD

July

E0727: Executive Order 11988 and 11990: Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection 7/6/2016 7/8/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0169: Annual Hazard Mitigation Stakeholder Workshop 7/6/2016 7/8/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0727: Executive Order 11988 and 11990: Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection 7/6/2016 7/8/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0361: Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools 7/11/2016 7/14/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0282: Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts II 7/11/2016 7/14/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0101: Foundations of Emergency Management 7/11/2016 7/22/2016 Emmitsburg MD
L0214: Unified Hazard Mitigation Assistance Project Implementation and Programmatic Closeout 7/12/2016 7/13/2016 Arlington TX
E0278: NFIP/Community Rating System 7/18/2016 7/21/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0190: ArcGIS for Emergency Managers 7/18/2016 7/21/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0426: Building a Roadmap to Resilience: A Whole Community Training 7/25/2016 7/27/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0202: Debris Management Planning for State, Tribal and Local Officials 7/25/2016 7/28/2016 Emmitsburg MD

August

E0364: Multihazard Emergency Planning for Schools 8/1/2016 8/3/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0361: Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools 8/1/2016 8/4/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0361: Multi-Hazard Emergency Planning for Schools 8/8/2016 8/11/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0102: Science for Disasters 8/8/2016 8/10/2016 Emmitsburg MD
L0278: National Flood Insurance Program/Community Rating System 8/15/2016 8/18/2016 Texarkana AR – in coordination with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission and the Arkansas Floodplain Management Association

August Trainings Continued from Page 16

E0580: Emergency Management Framework for Tribal Governments 8/15/2016 8/18/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0241: Cooperating Technical Partners: Special Topics 8/15/2016 8/18/2016 Emmitsburg MD
L0582: Mitigation for Tribal Governments 8/16/2016 8/19/2016 Ada OK
E0105: Public Information and Warning 8/17/2016 8/18/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0386: Residential Coastal Construction 8/22/2016 8/25/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0317: Comprehensive Data Management for Hazus-MH 8/29/2016 9/1/2016 Emmitsburg MD
E0284: Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts III 8/29/2016 9/1/2016 Emmitsburg MD

To obtain a student identification number for the Emergency Management Institute - <https://cdp.dhs.gov/femasid>

State Specific Training Opportunities:**Arkansas - <https://www.arkansasfloods.org/>**

- L0278: National Flood Insurance Program/Community Rating System 8/15/2016 8/18/2016 Texarkana AR – in coordination with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission and the Arkansas Floodplain Management Association

Oklahoma - http://www.owrb.ok.gov/hazard/fp/fp_workshops.php

- FPM 202 LOMC / Flood Mapping Disaster Exercise, June 15, 2016, Ardmore, OK
- FPM 101 / OFMA Advanced, June 28, 2016, Del City, OK

Texas - http://www.tfma.org/events/event_list.asp

- TFMA South Central - Region 6 Luncheon, June 02, 2016, Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, 200 E. Market Street, San Antonio, TX 78205. Registration begins at 9:30 am. Event is from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. Presentations include “3D Stream Modeling”, Floodplain Mapping and Flood Forecasting – Floodworks”, and more! Cost: \$20
- Regional County Workshop, 6/8/2016, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, Erwin Annex of the Hill County Courthouse, 200 E. Franklin Street, Hillsboro, TX. Course topics include State Regulations for County Floodplain Management, FEMA Regulations for County Floodplain Management, Zone A Floodplain Information and a Round Table workshop. Cost: \$20
- G273 Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program, 6/20/2016 to 6/24/2016, Pasadena, Texas
- L284 Advanced Floodplain Management, 8/1/2016 to 8/4/2016, San Antonio, TX

Earthquake? I didn't feel no ground shake!!!

They affect us all! Do you know what to do?

<https://www.ready.gov/earthquakes>

Useful Web Pages:

Region 6 Mitigation Division: <http://www.fema.gov/region-vi-mitigation-division>
Region 6 Mitigation Partners: <http://www.fema.gov/region-vi-mitigation-partners>
Region 6 Mitigation Contacts: <http://www.fema.gov/who-can-we-contact-region-vi-about-mitigation-programs>
Region 6 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP): <http://www.fema.gov/region-vi-hazard-mitigation-grant-program-hmgp>
Risk MAP for Region 6: <http://riskmap6.com/> or <http://maps.riskmap6.com>
FEMA Map Service Center: <http://msc.fema.gov/portal>
Texas CHART: <http://txchart.com/>
Homeowner's Flood Insurance Affordability Act (HFIAA) Updates: <http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance-reform>
FloodSmart: www.floodsmart.gov
Preparedness Information: www.ready.gov
ShakeOut - Earthquake Information - www.shakeout.org

Disaster Web Pages:

Arkansas:

- <http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4254>
- <http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4226>
- <http://www.fema.gov/arkansas-disaster-mitigation>

Louisiana:

- <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4263>
- <http://www.fema.gov/louisiana-disaster-mitigation>

Oklahoma:

- <http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4222>
- <https://www.fema.gov/oklahoma-disaster-mitigation>

Texas:

- <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4269>
- <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4266>
- <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4255>
- <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4245>
- <http://www.fema.gov/disaster/4223>
- <http://www.fema.gov/texas-disaster-mitigation>

***We welcome your thoughts, stories, and ideas for ways to make
"Keeping Current" a useful tool for you!
Please forward your feedback to
R6-Mitigation-Outreach@fema.dhs.gov.***