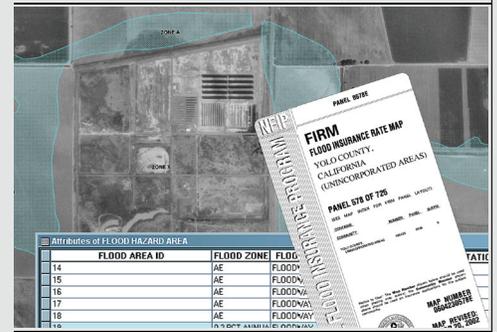


Digital Flood Maps

FROM Q3 FLOOD DATA TO DFIRMS



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) produces two flood map products using Geographic Information System (GIS) technology. The first product FEMA created is called digital Q3 Flood Data. As technology advanced, FEMA then created Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs). As part of Flood Map Modernization, FEMA will only update or produce DFIRMs.

GIS allows users to view information in a graphical format and add or remove layers of data. A GIS is a computer based system for the capture, storage, retrieval, manipulation, analysis, and display of geographic information. This information can be map data or non graphic attribute data that provides descriptive information about the features on the map. For more information on GIS, please visit FEMA's GIS Web site at www.gismaps.fema.gov/index.shtm.

The digital Q3 Flood Data product is a digital representation of certain features of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that is intended for use with desktop mapping and GIS technology. FEMA produces the digital Q3 Flood Data in three data formats that can be used with desktop mapping and GIS software, including ArcInfo, Digital Line Graph, and MapInfo. The digital Q3 Flood Data provide basic guidance and a general indication of the location of high-risk flood areas called Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), the areas subject to inundation

by the base (1-percent-annual-chance, or 100-year) flood.

The digital Q3 Flood Data do not replace the effective FIRM. FEMA designed the product to support planning activities, some Community Rating System activities, insurance marketing, and portfolio reviews. Base Flood Elevations are not included, so the application of the Q3 Flood Data files for engineering analysis, particularly for site design, or rating insurance policies for properties located in an SFHA is limited. The digital Q3 Flood Data should be considered an advisory tool for general hazard awareness, education, and floodplain management.

Digital Q3 Flood Data are available for many counties in the United States (approximately 1,300 of over 3,100 counties). It is important to note that the data in Q3 Flood Data Files were created using the effective FIRMs at that time. Thus, the data file does not include recent mappable Letters of Map Change or changes made by FEMA by physical updates to the FIRMs.

If you would like more information about the digital Q3 Flood Data product, please visit the FEMA Map Service Center Web site at msc.fema.gov.

FEMA is replacing the digital Q3 Flood Data with DFIRMs that have links to databases containing the engineering back-up material used to develop the map

For more information on DFIRMs, please visit FEMA's DFIRM homepage at:

www.fema.gov/fhm/dfm_dfhm.shtm

