

# ORIENTATION

## In this unit

This orientation presents a summary of the home study course:

- ◆ Its goals and objectives,
- ◆ How it is organized,
- ◆ The materials used, and
- ◆ Where to get help.

## Materials used in this unit



- ◆ Videotape segment, *Welcome to the Course*
- ◆ Videocassette player.

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# A. INTRODUCTION

Responsibility for flood loss reduction is shared by all units of government—local, state and federal—and the private sector.

Fulfilling this responsibility depends on having the knowledge and skills to plan and implement needed floodplain management measures. The fundamental floodplain management program that most others are built on is the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

The NFIP provides the maps and regulatory basis for local floodplain management. It is also the primary source of insurance protection for floodprone properties. Its success depends on the people responsible for administering its mapping, regulatory and insurance aspects.

The purpose of this home study course is to enhance the knowledge and skills of local officials responsible for administering and enforcing local floodplain management regulations. It is also intended to broaden their understanding of floodplain management strategies that can be applied at the local level.

While any interested person may take this course, it is written specifically for the local official who is responsible for administering his or her community's floodplain management regulations. Thus, references to “you,” the person taking the course, assume that you are that local official.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completing the course, you should:

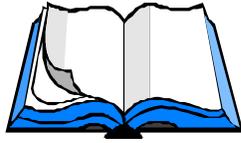
1. Be familiar with flood hazards and how human development interacts with the natural process of flooding.
2. Understand the purpose of the NFIP and your community's role in it.
3. Understand the basis for flood maps and data.
4. Be able to use floodplain studies and maps to support your floodplain management program.
5. Be able to explain the minimum regulatory requirements of the NFIP.
6. Be familiar with additional regulatory standards that your community could adopt.
7. Understand your responsibilities in administering your community's floodplain regulations for new construction.
8. Understand how to administer your community's floodplain regulations for repairs and improvements to existing buildings.

9. Be familiar with how flood insurance policies are written and how they relate to your community's regulations.
10. Be prepared to administer your floodplain regulations following a disaster.

These 10 objectives are the topics of the 10 units in this course.

## B. COURSE MATERIALS

This is a multimedia course, using a notebook, videotapes and tools such as maps and an engineer's scale.



### NOTEBOOK

The loose-leaf notebook holds the primary instructional material—ten units—and seven appendices.

In **Units 1 and 2**, you'll be introduced to the kinds of floods common to communities in the United States, the concepts behind floodplain management and the NFIP.

In **Unit 3**, you'll learn about the various types of flood data needed to administer a floodplain management program.

**Unit 4** discusses how to use the data provided in NFIP studies and maps.

**Unit 5** is the first of four units about administering floodplain management regulations. In **Unit 5**, you'll find out about the minimum regulatory requirements communities must enforce under the NFIP. **Unit 6** contains additional measures recommended to help make your regulations more effective and more appropriate to your local flood conditions and community needs.

**Unit 7** discusses the steps needed to administer a floodplain management ordinance, and **Unit 8** goes into detail on the special situations of dealing with changes to existing buildings.

In **Unit 9**, the relationship between flood insurance and your floodplain management program is reviewed.

**Unit 10**, the last in the course, reviews the things you need to be ready for following a disaster and how you can make your community's program more effective in reducing flood losses.

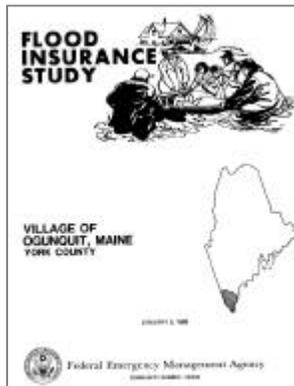
The seven appendices provide contacts for assistance, references, technical terms, and NFIP materials.



## VIDEO SEGMENTS

Two videotapes, with four segments each, provide detailed information about several topics. They will assist you in understanding the materials, as well as provide examples of practical situations.

To help you plan when and where to study, the cover page of each unit indicates whether it includes one or more video segments.



## FLOOD INSURANCE STUDY AND MAPS

The fictitious community of Flood County, USA, has been selected as a sample community for the purposes of this course.

The Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Map for Flood County provide opportunities to read and interpret the data in a typical flood insurance study and maps. This town provides examples of both coastal and riverine data and maps.

## ENGINEER'S SCALE

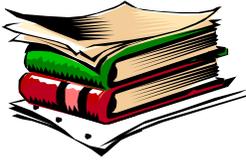


The clear plastic engineer's scale is included for use in some of the exercises in this course. It helps relate distances on the ground to measurement on a map.



## LEARNING CHECKS

Learning checks and unit learning exercises appear throughout the text. Answers to learning checks and exercises are at the end of each unit.



## SUPPLEMENTARY READING MATERIALS

Most units include a list of references for supplementary reading to reinforce the text materials or to provide additional information related to a specific topic.

This course includes two booklets that can be very helpful to you:

- ◆ *Answers to Questions About the National Flood Insurance Program* (FIA-2, 1997) provides more details on the NFIP, flood insurance coverage, and flood insurance maps. It is used to help explain some of the material in Units 2 and 9.
- ◆ *Repairing Your Flooded Home* (FEMA 234, 1992) explains the steps building owners should follow after a flood. It is discussed more in Unit 10.

The appendices provide a list of acronyms, definitions of floodplain management terms and other reference materials.

## C. TAKING THE COURSE

To administer a floodplain management program, you need to know about regulations and procedures under the National Flood Insurance Program. This course is designed to prepare you to serve as administrator.

As you can tell by the size of this volume and accompanying materials, you need to acquire a daunting amount of information. Most of it is covered in these pages, as this course is a comprehensive guide to the NFIP and your role as administrator.

At the outset, you may be discouraged by your grasp of flood insurance and floodplain management—and the size of this course. That's to be expected; there's a lot to know. But there's also ample time to learn, as this course is meant to be completed at your pace, not a predetermined rate.

By design, this course will help you learn. Key words and phrases appear with underlines and they are listed in the glossary in Appendix D. Maps and videos are provided to illustrate certain points. Each unit has frequent learning checks and a comprehensive review at the end. Be sure to do all of these – you learn best when you practice using the materials.

So, sit back, relax—and study as little or as much as you can handle in one sitting. There's a lot, but if you proceed at your own pace, you'll do well.



### COURSE COMPLETION

Your final step is to submit and pass the final examination. *[For the pilot students only:]* When you are ready for it, call 708/747-5273 and ask for it. The exam is designed to test how well you learned the material presented in the course.

An answer sheet to use in taking the exam is supplied.

Mail the completed answer sheet to the address on the form. Your results will be mailed to you within a few weeks. Score seventy five percent or higher, and you will be sent a certificate of completion.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT**

Using the International Association of Continuing Education Training Guidelines, continuing education credits may be awarded for completion of this course. Interested students may also apply for one semester hour of college credit through Lewis and Clark Community College, in association with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Management Institute (EMI).

## **WHERE TO GET HELP**

For help in understanding any of the course content, contact your FEMA Regional Office or state flood insurance coordinator.

These offices are listed in Appendices A and B.

For help in obtaining course materials and submitting the final examination, call EMI in Emmitsburg, Maryland, 301-447-1000 or 800-238-3358.



### **VIDEO: *WELCOME TO THE COURSE***

This is a good time to review the first video segment, "Introduction to the Course," by Mike Armstrong, Associate Director of FEMA for Mitigation.

After viewing, stop the tape and return to the text. Do not rewind.

## D. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This home-study course is based on a resident course offered at the Emergency Management Institute, course E-273, *Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program*.

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- ◆ The Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs, which prepared several of the original videos that are used in this course.
- ◆ The Town of Ogunquit, Maine, for its help with the maps.

### Illustrations

Except as noted here, all illustrations are from FEMA or French & Associates. Special thanks to Dewberry & Davis for its support in preparing many of the figures.

Figure credits: 1-6: *Managing Coastal Erosion*, p. 31; 1-10: *Landslide Loss Reduction*, Colorado Geological Survey, 1989, p. 15; 1-14: *Striking a Balance – A Guide to Coastal Processes and Beach Management in Delaware*, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, 1985; 1-17: *Roanoke Times and World News*; 5-17 Berry A. Williams & Associates, Inc.; 6-3: *Subdivision Design in Flood Hazard Areas*, p. 19; 6-5: *Planning for Hillside Development*, p. 4; 6-6: *Environmental Management: A Guide for Town Officials*, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, 1992, p. 4.