



Training and Certification are Invaluable

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State Floodplain Manager, OWRB



Ken Morris

Oklahoma is proud of its 95 Certified Floodplain Managers, all members of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association, who guide and encourage intelligent development along the state's rivers and streams. I can tell you from personal experience that these men and women really know their stuff and their job is a difficult one.

However, concerns remain about the administration of local floodplain management programs by undertrained and unqualified staff in some Oklahoma communities. In this regard, the OWRB provided valuable training of local officials during six separate months last year. Of the 363 communities in Oklahoma that administer flood ordinances, only approximately

150 floodplain administrators attended OWRB-sponsored training opportunities. As a result, less than one-half of officials are likely unaware of recent changes in state and federal regulations and the latest floodplain management procedures. In addition, individuals who missed our training sessions deprived themselves of any opportunity to become certified floodplain managers and the many benefits that designation provides.

The CFM program, a major aspect of community NFIP compliance, enhances the status of professional floodplain managers, raises the awareness of the role of the floodplain manager to citizens and local officials, increases opportunities for training and continuing education, facilitates flood loss reduction, decreases loss of life from flood, and results in the preservation of the many natural and cultural benefits provided by Oklahoma's scenic and valuable floodplain areas.

I urge you to call me at 405-530-880 if you would like more information about the CFM program, or go to <http://www.okflood.org>, the web site of the Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association.

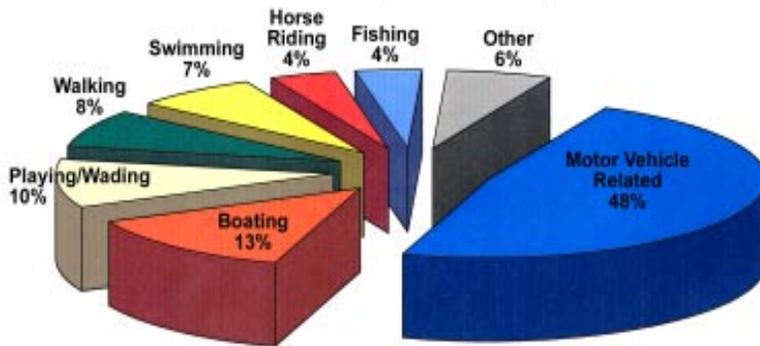
State Receives National Floodplain Management Award

On June 7, 2001, Oklahoma was presented with the Tom Lee State Award of Excellence for the quality of its floodplain management program. The award was presented by the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) at the organization's 25th annual conference in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The success of Oklahoma's floodplain management program lies in the quality and extent of the many partnerships developed between state and federal agencies, organizations, businesses, elected representatives, and private citizens. Among recognized programs and publications were the Oklahoma Water Resources Board's annual Spring Flood Campaign, the biannual *Flood Current* newsletter, the state's floodplain permitting program on state-owned and -operated property, the 1999 Guidebook for Local Floodplain Ordinance Administrators, and various publications and videos on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and hazard mitigation. The award also recognized many of the partnerships and team-building approaches used by the OWRB in its general floodplain management program. Partners in this effort include the Oklahoma Department of Civil Emergency Management, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, University of Oklahoma, Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Association of County Commissioners, Oklahoma Municipal League, State Legislature, Oklahoma Emergency Managers Association, and Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association (OFMA).

The organization also awarded OFMA the first John Ivey Award for Superior Certification Program for establishing the first nationally accredited certified floodplain manager program in the U.S. Although Oklahoma has only two percent of NFIP member communities in the nation, state and local floodplain management activities are directed by 12 percent of all certified, professional floodplain managers in the U.S.

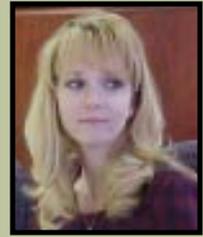
Flood-Related Injuries by Activity Oklahoma (1988-2000)



The risk of flooding and flash floods is high for Oklahomans. Severe storms occurring sporadically during the year, especially in the spring months, along with Oklahoma's clay soils, account for this risk. A total of 75 flood-related or fatal submersion injuries occurred in Oklahoma from 1988-2000; 65 of these were fatal. Motor vehicle flood-related submersions accounted for 36 of the injuries.

Floodplain Manager of the Year

Each year, OFMA selects an individual who has shown significant excellence in the field of floodplain management. This individual has demonstrated dedication through the administration of his or her community's floodplain management program in pursuing the goals of flood loss reduction and in the prevention of loss of life. OFMA is pleased to announce the 2001 recipient of the Floodplain Manager of the Year Award, **Nancy Wade** of Bartlesville.



Training is available for floodplain administrators throughout the year.

For more information, please contact Ken Morris or Rhonda Kouba at (405) 530-8800.

Is Your Floodplain Administrator Up to Speed?

In Oklahoma, 363 communities currently participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Each has adopted a flood hazard prevention ordinance containing a set of regulations to mitigate flood losses and protect the natural floodplain environment.

A floodplain administrator—a mayor, city manager, or appointed individual—is responsible for ensuring that there are no floodplain violations in the community that could lead to probation or suspension from the NFIP. However, frequent turnover in this position often leaves communities with floodplain administrators who have insufficient training, and quite often, they are simply unaware of measures to enforce local ordinances. Here are the most common NFIP violations of Oklahoma communities:

- Failure to Require Permits for Floodplain Development

A permit is required for development that occurs in a special flood hazard area. Development is defined as any manmade change to improved or unimproved real estate, including buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, or drilling operations.

- Failure to Submit Corporate Limit Changes to FEMA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) must be notified any time a participating community changes its corporate limits.

- Failure to Require Elevation of Structures Built in special flood hazard areas to the Base Flood Elevation

Any residential structure built in a special flood hazard area must be elevated at least to the base flood elevation. (Non-residential structures can be elevated or flood-protected.)

- Failure to Require "No Rise" Certificates for Structures Located in a Regulatory Floodway

Any structure built or placed in a regulatory floodway is required to have a certificate of "no rise" completed by a certified engineer.

- Failure to Notify the OWRB of a New Floodplain Manager

The OWRB must be notified by letter when a new floodplain administrator is appointed.