

## Training Opportunities Abound for Flood Officials



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 To assist in publicizing and promoting the benefits of flood insurance, Governor Brad Henry proclaimed March 2005 as Flood Insurance Month in Oklahoma, where only 12 percent of homes in the floodplain have a flood insurance policy.

If flooded, these homes will not be covered by a standard homeowner's policy and thus will receive no insurance benefits. Most flood disasters in Oklahoma occur 11 days on either side of Mother's Day (the second Sunday in May). Since it requires 30 days before most flood insurance policies go into effect, now is the time to seek protection through purchase of a flood policy.

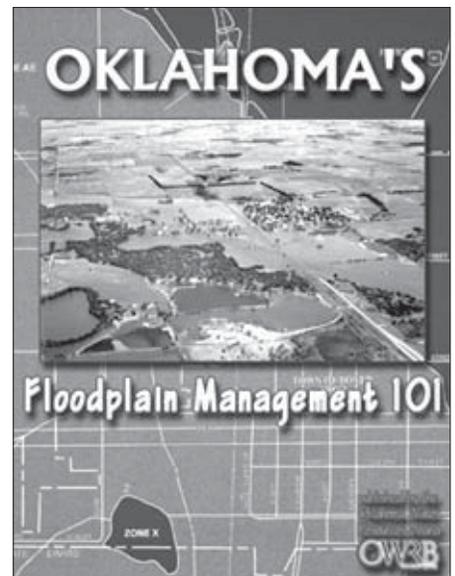
This year, Governor Henry has proclaimed May as Flood Awareness Month because it is Oklahoma's most frequent month for flooding disasters. As an integral part of the OWRB's flood awareness campaign, we are hosting 10 day-long workshops throughout the state to update city and county flood-plain administrators on NFIP compliance requirements as well as provide assistance in the development, administration, and enforcement of local floodplain management regulations that guide floodplain development.

New training textbooks will be provided to workshop participants and the certified floodplain manager (CFM) exam will be offered to pre-approved candidates at the close of each training day. There is no registration fee for the workshops, which will feature speakers from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and R.D. Flanagan and Associates.

In addition to our standard introductory *Floodplain Management 101* classes, which focus on administration and enforcement of the basic NFIP program, we will now offer the first *Floodplain Management 202* workshops to serve the professional development and continuing education credit (CEC) needs of Oklahoma's floodplain officials. These workshops, developed as a result

of past years' class evaluations and requests for more advanced training, include training on No Adverse Impact, Map Modernization, Hazard Mitigation, Cooperating Technical Partners, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Stormwater Management, and Floodproofing. I want to thank Joe Remondini for agreeing to host these 202 Workshops. I also thank our guest instructors, consultant Ron Flanagan, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Andy Commer, and DEQ staff.

I strongly encourage all floodplain officials in Oklahoma to attend at least one of these sessions. This is one important way in which we can work to improve floodplain management in Oklahoma.



*Updated Floodplain Management 101 textbook, available to workshop participants*



*In conjunction with Flood Awareness Month, the OWRB has updated its Floodplain Management bulletins, now available upon request.*

## Floodplain Management 101 and 202 Workshops

As an integral part of Oklahoma's spring flood awareness campaign, the OWRB is sponsoring 10 one-day workshops (five 101 workshops and five 202 workshops) throughout the state in May to update city, county, and tribal floodplain administrators on NFIP compliance requirements and provide assistance in the development, administration, and enforcement of local floodplain management regulations.

The 202 workshops are provided for the first time this year to assist the professional development of floodplain managers. The Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) exam will be offered to pre-approved candidates at the close of each training day. There is no registration fee for the workshops. The Oklahoma Insurance Department has approved 6 hours of continuing education credits (CECs) for both property/casualty agents and insurance adjusters who attend.

The one-day workshops will begin at 8:30 a.m. and adjourn at 4:30 p.m. Workshop dates and locations are as follows:

- May 3, Bartlesville
- May 5, Woodward
- May 10, Lawton
- May 12, McAlester
- May 17, Midwest City

For registration information, call the OWRB at (405) 530-8800 or register online at [www.owrb.state.ok.us/hazard/fp/fp\\_workshops.php](http://www.owrb.state.ok.us/hazard/fp/fp_workshops.php).

## Modernizing Oklahoma's Flood Maps

Many of Oklahoma's floodplain maps, like those throughout several other states, no longer realistically depict the true flood risk to communities and rural areas. As part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Map Modernization Program, the OWRB is working closely with the federal government in preparing a plan to update the state's floodplain delineation maps. Critical to this activity will be forming and strengthening partnerships between the OWRB and the federal government, state agencies, and local communities. The Water Board has signed an agreement with FEMA to become a Cooperating Technical Partner, a designation through which the agency collaborates with FEMA to maintain up-to-date flood maps and other flood hazard information.

The Map Modernization Program consists of a multi-year effort to update flood maps and present them in a more reliable digital format that is easily accessible to local and state floodplain officials. Not only will the new maps help manage development and emergency response, but they will assist lenders and insurance agents in offering the proper protection to their clients. FEMA's five year plan, called the Multi-Year Flood Hazard Identification Plan (MHIP), provides the sequence in which communities will be studied. By the end of the five year period, an estimated 20,000 communities will have new flood hazard maps. Through a premier data collection and delivery system, a National Service Provider, hired by FEMA, will manage Map Modernization and provide continual, national updates on each community's progress.

## Feds Urge Citizens to be "Flood Smart"

Department of Homeland Security Under Secretary Michael D. Brown reminds Americans to be "FloodSmart" as the spring flooding season begins.

The Department's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently teamed with its partners at the National Weather Service for the first-ever Flood Safety Awareness Week (March 21-25) to raise public attention to the dangers of flooding and ways to protect life and property.

According to Brown, flooding is America's number one natural hazard, and all states are at risk for flooding. In an average year, floods kill more than 100 people and are responsible for \$4.6 billion in damage in the United States. More than half of those deaths occur in vehicles overtaken by floodwaters.

Being "FloodSmart" means knowing about the risks and ways to protect yourself, your family, and your home. Since homeowner's insurance doesn't cover flood damage, flood insurance is the only cost-effective way for citizens to protect themselves from the financial loss posed by flooding. It only takes an inch of water to do costly damage to your property.

Learn more about flood precautions at [www.fema.gov/hazards/floods/](http://www.fema.gov/hazards/floods/). For information about risk and flood insurance, visit [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) or call (800) 427-4219.

