May was Flood Awareness Month in Oklahoma

Historically, the greatest number of Oklahoma flood disasters have occurred during the month of May. To raise awareness about flood safety and floodplain management, Governor Mary Fallin declared May to be “Flood Awareness Month” in Oklahoma on behalf of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB) and several other agency and community partners.

In the spring of 2015, and again in early 2016, several parts of Oklahoma experienced tragic loss of life and property due to widespread flood disasters that were caused by record levels of precipitation in many areas. Nationally, flood events remain the number one natural disaster causing more than $10 billion in property damage, as well as numerous deaths each year.

In a flood event, it is critical that Oklahomans closely follow proper flood safety procedures such as refraining from driving into floodwaters. During Oklahoma’s recent flood disasters, emergency responders assisted with numerous vehicle-related flood emergencies that easily could have been prevented by simply turning the vehicle around. Thank you for joining the OWRB in recognizing May as “Flood Awareness Month” and in raising awareness about preventing and mitigating flooding disasters.

President Trump Approves Major Disaster Declaration for State of Oklahoma

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced that federal disaster assistance has been made available to the state of Oklahoma to supplement state and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding from April 28 to May 2, 2017.

Funding is available to state and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by severe storms, tornadoes, and flooding in the Adair, Beaver, Caddo, Cherokee, Cimarron, Craig, Delaware, Haskell, Kiowa, Lincoln, Logan, Mayes, Muskogee, Ottawa, Pittsburg, Sequoyah, Texas, and Washita counties.

Funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

Charles Maskell has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for recovery operations in the affected area. Maskell said additional designations may be made at a later date if warranted by the results of damage assessments.

Turn Around Don’t Drown Signs Available

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), flash floods are the number one weather-related killer in the nation. Most flood fatalities happen because motorists attempt to drive through deadly waters rather than avoid them.

Thanks to FEMA grant funding, 300 Turn Around Don’t Drown signs are available to communities at no cost, provided the communities’ Floodplain Manager registers the locations with flash flood potential. In addition to improving safety for motorists, the OFMA and the OWRB will use the information submitted by communities to map low water crossings and flooded roads statewide. The program’s long-term goal is to accurately predict when the mapped crossings might flood, through coordination with the National Weather Service, so that traffic safety measures can be taken to prevent driving through flood waters. Contact Jon Phillips or Aaron Milligan at (405) 530-8800 for more information.
OWRB Welcomes New Staff

The OWRB would like to welcome Aaron Milligan and Jonathan Phillips to the Floodplain Management program. Prior to joining the OWRB in December 2016, Aaron worked for the City of Norman as a stormwater program specialist where he collaborated with the OWRB on several projects. He holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Science from the University of Oklahoma and brings years of knowledge and experience to the Floodplain Management program.

Jonathan Phillips rejoined the OWRB in February 2017. He previously worked with the OWRB's Dam Safety program and has also been involved in the energy industry. Jon has an extensive background in geographic information systems (GIS) and graphic design. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Geography from the University of Central Oklahoma and is a valuable addition to the Floodplain Management program.

5 Facts About the NFIP

1. Everyone lives in a flood zone.
   You do not need to live near water to be flooded. Floods are caused by storms, melting snow, hurricanes, water backup due to inadequate or overloaded drainage systems, and broken water mains.

2. Flood damage is not covered by homeowners’ policies.
   You can protect your home, business, and belongings with flood insurance from the NFIP. You can insure your home with flood insurance up to $250,000 for the building and $100,000 for the contents.

3. You can buy flood insurance no matter your flood risk.
   Whether your flood risk is high or low, most anyone in an NFIP-participating community can buy building and/or contents coverage, but there are exceptions. Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) areas, Otherwise Protected Areas (OPAs), and buildings principally below ground or entirely over water are not eligible for Federal flood insurance. It is a good idea to buy even in lower-risk areas because more than 20 percent of all NFIP claims are outside mapped high-risk areas.

4. The low-cost Preferred Risk Policy is ideal for homes and businesses currently mapped in moderate- to low-risk areas.
   Homeowners who qualify may purchase coverage for their building and contents for as little as $129 per year. Qualified business owners may also purchase coverage for their building and contents for as little as $643 per year. Owners of residential contents-only can purchase a policy for as little as $57 per year.

5. Flood insurance is widely available.
   About 85 private insurance companies nationally offer flood insurance backed by the Federal Government. Contact your local agent. Policies are available to homeowners, condominium associations and unit owners, renters, and business owners alike.

2017-2018 Workshop Schedule Announced

Floodplain management workshops for the 2017-2018 training year have been posted on the OWRB’s website. The OWRB offers these workshops in an effort to provide floodplain administrators (FPAs) with the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively and efficiently administer their local programs. FPAs can apply these courses to their accreditation requirement of 6 Continuing Education Credits (CECs) per year. New courses focused on day-to-day FPA tasks and responsibilities such as mapping, outreach, permitting, and elevation certificates have been added to the calendar. Visit www.owrb.ok.gov/fpm for the complete list and sign up today.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 4, 2017</td>
<td>Floodplain Management 101</td>
<td>Tahlequah</td>
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<td>January 10, 2018</td>
<td>Floodplain Management 101</td>
<td>Oklahoma City</td>
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<td>January 29 - February 2, 2018</td>
<td>L-273 CFM Course/Exam</td>
<td>Oklahoma City</td>
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<td>February 21, 2018</td>
<td>Permitting/Elevation Certificates</td>
<td>McAlester</td>
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<td>March 7, 2018</td>
<td>Floodplain Management 101</td>
<td>Clinton</td>
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<td>March 28, 2018</td>
<td>Floodplain Management 101</td>
<td>Chickasha</td>
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<td>April 17, 2018</td>
<td>OFMA Advanced Course</td>
<td>Langley, OK</td>
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<td>April 18, 2018</td>
<td>Substantial Damage Estimator Tool (FEMA)</td>
<td>Oklahoma City</td>
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As the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) State Coordinator, the Oklahoma Water Resources Board partners with other state and federal agencies and local governments to prevent and mitigate the catastrophic effects of flooding disasters in Oklahoma. For more information, visit www.owrb.ok.gov/fpm or call (405)530-8800.