

KANSAS

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT TIPS



April 2023

Flood Safety Awareness Week March 6-10, 2023

The Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA)-Division of Water Resources (DWR) coordinated this past March with the Kansas Department of Emergency Management (KDEM) as well as the National Weather Service (NWS) and governor's office to have a proclamation by the governor recognizing Flood Safety Awareness Week. It is an annual collaborative effort to raise awareness during the start of spring which historically brings severe storms and increased flooding. Past proclamations can be seen on the Division of Water Resources website: [Division of Water Resources](#)

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The week deliberately coincided with the NWS Severe Weather Awareness week, which includes the threat of other hazards in addition to flooding. That week occurred this year, March 6th-10th. Each day of the week was dedicated to a different severe weather threat, with Friday observing flood safety. Monday was in observance of preparedness, followed by tornado safety on Tuesday, lightning safety on Wednesday, and hail/wind safety on Thursday. Many of these hazards can appear concurrently with the threat of flood danger. It is important to remember that floods kill more people in the United States each year than any other thunderstorm-related hazard, with the majority of those being people driving into flooded roads. Each day has a link to additional information on the threat and how to best prepare for and avoid them. Specifically, flood watches vs. Warnings, and what to do before, during, and after a flood. There are links to outreach materials, how to receive forecasts, the Turn Around Don't Drown campaign, and more. These can be seen here: [NWS Flood Safety Tips and Resources](#)

Flood Safety Awareness Week is an effort on behalf of KDA-DWR and KDEM to emphasize awareness of preparing for and understanding flooding in Kansas and encourage citizens to prepare homes, businesses, and communities for flooding. Flooding, per the Kansas Hazard Mitigation Plan, is one of the costliest types of natural disasters in Kansas, and all areas of the state are at varying degrees of risk. Floods can happen at any time and without warning, and damage is not covered by the standard homeowner's policy. A separate flood insurance policy is needed and highly recommended for those in high-risk areas. Localized flash flooding has occurred throughout the state in the past few years, with widespread flooding throughout the state in 2019. Since these localized flash flood areas are often not depicted on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), everyone is encouraged to consider carrying flood insurance especially with the rise in more frequent high intensity storm events projected. In turn, KDA-DWR, KDEM, the Secretary of the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Insurance Commissioner, and the Kansas Adjutant General support the implementation of Flood Safety Awareness week each year.



Flood Safety Awareness Week Proclamation Signing 2023

KDA-DWR Interagency Work

KDA-DWR is committed to working with other state and federal agencies and departments to engage in interagency projects to realize common goals and provide solutions to flooding problems and risk analysis with a more holistic approach. Flood Safety Awareness Week is an example of one such initiative, but there are many more. Both sides of the KDA floodplain team that specialize in rules and regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and the Cooperating Technical Partner (CTP) component that focuses on

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producing FEMA flood maps, participate in interagency collaboration. The team has engaged on several projects with other agencies which include KDEM, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and have also enlisted the assistance of state contractors to help facilitate the projects.

Silver Jackets is an interagency initiative from USACE across all states, including Kansas, to bring together stakeholders to reduce risk from flooding, enhance preparedness, mitigation, and response and recovery efforts. This group includes the Kansas Hazard Mitigation Team (KHMT) which includes individuals from KDA, KDEM, and other state agencies: [KHMT Charter](#). KDA-DWR has engaged in several projects through this team, over the years. KDA and USACE teamed up last year to provide a workshop on nonstructural floodproofing, which was hosted in Garnett. Between 2020 and 2022 the two agencies also collaborated on “Risk Outreach and Communication in Kansas” (ROCK) to provide historical flood signs to communities, as well as the NWS “Turn Around Don’t Drown” signs for low water crossings to raise awareness of risk and increase resiliency. Additionally, levee safety signs were provided to communities with levees to discourage damaging activities that degrade the structural integrity of levees.

KDA-DWR also funds technical assistance projects in coordination with contractors. This funding is provided not for construction of projects, but to model mitigation scenarios, ordinance or code support, engineering and analysis, planning, and outreach and education projects. Many of the requested projects focus on the creation of mapping products in addition to the regulatory products to better inform the community of their unique flooding patterns and risk. There are multiple ongoing projects throughout the state, such as possible mitigation solutions for Garden Plain, stormwater sewer system modeling for Concordia, and more. Many requests focus on floodplain studies to provide more in-depth information by running mitigation scenarios with the floodplain models available through the statewide Base Level Engineering (BLE) mapping effort, so that communities may make informed decisions going forward. KDEM, KDA-DWR and USACE through the Silver Jackets Program are teaming together to look at providing technical assistance to communities that have applied for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant in order to save BRIC funds for construction costs.

KDA coordinates with other agencies for mitigation purposes, to reduce loss of life and property to flooding. Much of this coordination is through KHMT, especially the State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) with KDEM. Additional interagency coordination happens with FEMA Region VII staff in coordination with KDEM to administer FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grants that aim to fund mitigation projects both before and after flooding events. Additional information on DWR interagency projects, technical assistance projects, and how to apply for a project can be found here: [KDA Technical Assistance Information](#) USACE also supports floodplain management planning projects outside of the Silver Jackets program as well: [Floodplain Management \(army.mil\)](#)



Post Flood Responsibility

Kansas and the Midwest is most vulnerable to floods during the spring and summer months. For this reason, it is important to not only be prepared for dealing with a flooding disaster, but to understand and have a plan for post flooding responsibilities before it happens. Improper disaster recovery in the floodplain can result in larger, long-term problems. This could extend the recovery period exponentially as the floodplain administrator works to resolve violations that took place during the recovery process. This is usually a result of citizens rushing to recover and rebuild without getting a floodplain development permit or before the completion of substantial damage assessments.

Having information ready and a process in place, including trained personnel for conducting inspections will save valuable time during the recovery process. Substantial damage is reached if the cost for repair is 50% or more of the market value. The structure then must be brought into compliance with the current floodplain

regulations if it is not already compliant. It is important to remember that stress and confusion will immediately follow the flood or other natural disaster event, making recovery operations much more difficult. The floodplain administrator may be dealing with damage to their own structure(s) as well as having to coordinate recovery activities. Substantial damage must be assessed for structures damaged in the floodplain from any cause, not just flooding. Tornadoes can often be part of storm systems that contribute to flooding as well as being highly destructive, impacting wide swaths of structures that require multiple teams to do assessments. The floodplain administrator is responsible for ensuring assessments are completed in a timely manner for insurance claims and to ensure repairs are permitted. Emotions will be running high, which can also complicate getting compliance, especially if the structure needs expensive modifications. Following a disaster, the NWS Damage Assessment Toolkit (DAT) can aid with information on damage collected and the swaths of damage are tracked. The dataset can be seen through a web-based GIS service found here: [Damage Assessment Toolkit \(noaa.gov\)](#)

Once the initial emergency evacuations and threat of danger during a flood has subsided, recovery operations need to begin immediately. The first step is to establish the scope of damaged structures, how many there are and which of them are in the floodplain. Your current effective floodplains (digitalized) can be seen here: [Kansas Floodplain Viewer \(ks.gov\)](#). Once that is established, a windshield inspection is done. The floodplain administrator will estimate the amount of damage to the structure from the outside and prioritize the order of inspections with those the closest to the 50% substantial damage threshold first. Doing outreach to the impacted property owners is critical. They should be informed that an inspection will be done by the floodplain administrator, or their authorized representative, which will include entering homes. The floodplain administrator should wear clothing or a badge that identifies them as a community official. Structures may be inspected multiple times by different community departments or other agencies for different reasons, which are separate from the substantial damage assessment, so citizens should be made aware of multiple inspections happening. Attaching doorhangers as soon as possible with this information as well as a floodplain development permit application and relevant FEMA publications may be the best way to reach out to them quickly and avoid repairs without permitting. There have been cases when estimations were not completed in a timely manner and multiple property owners sold their homes before recovery was completed. Kansas does not have laws requiring disclosure of flood history by the seller or real estate agents. Caution should be taken when entering damaged structures, as dangers from damage could be present, even if floodwater is not.

Engage the public, especially floodplain residents, by utilizing social media, making statements to the media, issuing a press release, and holding public meetings. This can help to control rumors or misinformation from spreading. Ensure your communications are consistent with other community officials and departments. Ideally, the community will work together to support and achieve goals in recovery and mitigation. This would include open communication with the public of relevant and important information.

KDA-DWR has template worksheets for doing assessments of the various elements of the structure. Other resources as well as upcoming and recorded training is available on post flood responsibility and substantial damage. FEMA has developed software (Substantial Damage Estimator version 3.0) to help streamline the process and organize assessments and property files. KDA-DWR recommends creating a record of floodplain properties ahead of time, as well as coordinating with the appraiser's office for your community to have access to market value information. KDA-DWR will reach out to your community to offer assistance and guidance on recovery approximately 48 hours after the disaster. This is to give enough time for the immediate danger to subside and ensure that safety is the first concern. Once this period has elapsed, recovery will be the next priority. Following a disaster, feel free to make contact with KDA-DWR at any point assistance is needed or wanted before or after the 48-hour period and initial contact.

The best policy is to prepare before something happens. Every community will suffer a flood or other natural disaster at some point, so avoiding delays during that time will improve the experience of all involved, including citizens. Disaster recovery is one of, if not the most challenging aspect of floodplain management, so preparation is key to doing it successfully. It is necessary for increasing resiliency to flooding and other hazards for the future. KDA-DWR is hosting a Post Flood Responsibility training later this month: virtual training 1:30-2:30 P.M. April 12, 2023, please register [here](#).

Training Opportunities

Post Flood Responsibility

This course will cover community responsibilities after a flood. Topics will include surveying damages, substantial damages, permits for repairs and other considerations. The format will be an online webinar using the Zoom software platform. This class has been approved for 1 hour of Continuing Education Credit (CEC) toward the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) credential. Virtual training on April 12, 2023, from 1:30-2:30 P.M. Please [Register Here](#).

Benefit-Cost Analysis Workshop

The goal of the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) Workshop is to educate participants on the software and information needed to perform a BCA on potential mitigation projects using FEMA's current BCA software (version 6.0). This course will assist participants in developing quality BCAs to use when developing grant applications for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs. Each participant will need to bring a laptop with the newest FEMA Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) Toolkit installed (Version 6.0). The BCA Toolkit can be downloaded from the following link: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/benefit-cost-analysis>. In-person Training at 1320 Research Park Drive, Manhattan, Ks 66502 on April 19-20, 2023. To register, please send an email to Tara Lanzrath at Tara.Lanzrath@ks.gov. Limited to 30 participants.

Substantial Damage Estimation Overview

This class is for officials responsible for conducting or delegating substantial damage assessments after flooding or any other damage to structure in the floodplain. This class will give an introduction and overview of FEMA's Substantial Damage Estimator software and how it can be used to produce consistent, organized, and defensible damage assessments. Download of the software is not required. Approved for 2 hours of Continuing Education Credit (CEC) toward the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) credential. Virtual Training held on **April 26, 2023** from **9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.** Please Register [Here](#).

Find more information about floodplain management from Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources online at:

<http://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain>

Email saves money on postage. The electronic newsletter also has links and the photos are in color. In the case that you are getting this newsletter by postal mail and would prefer email please contact Cheyenne Sun Eagle at: cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov.

To find and register for upcoming training, as well as recordings of previous trainings, please see our new
Floodplain Management Training webpage at:

<https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain/training>

Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources
Floodplain Program
Training Registration Form

Name _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

Name, date and location of training you will attend _____

*Please share this invitation with anyone else who could benefit from the training.

**Classroom locations will be sent to registered participants one week before the training.

**To find and register for upcoming training, as well as recordings of previous trainings, please see our new Floodplain Management Training webpage at: <https://agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/dwr/floodplain/training>

** Any individual with a disability may request accommodation in order to participate in training. Persons who require special accommodations must make their needs known at least five working days prior to training. For more information, including special accommodations, please contact Cheyenne Sun Eagle at 785-296-0854 or by email Cheyenne.Suneagle@ks.gov.

Please scan and email your registration to: cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov

Or mail to:

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
1131 SW Winding Road, Suite 400
TOPEKA, KS 66615

For questions about training, please contact Cheyenne Sun Eagle by email at cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov or by phone at 785-296-0854. You may also contact Tara Lanzrath by email at tara.lanzrath@ks.gov or by phone at 785-296-2513

Please help us keep our records current. If the name that appears on this newsletter is for an individual no longer with your organization, please call 785-296-0854 or email cheyenne.suneagle@ks.gov to report the change.

Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources
Topeka Field Office
Floodplain Management
1131 SW Winding Road, Suite 400
Topeka, KS 66615

Kansas Association For Floodplain Management 2023 Conference in Mulvane

The 2023 KAFM Conference will be August 30-31 at the Kansas Star Hotel and Event Center in Mulvane, Kansas.

Association of State Floodplain Managers 2023 Conference in Raleigh

The 2023 ASFPM Conference will be May 7-11, at the Raleigh Convention Center in Raleigh, North Carolina.

**KDA/DWR Water Structures
Floodplain Program Staff**

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