

KANSAS

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

TIPS



July 2014

Kansas Department of Agriculture Moves to Manhattan

The main office for the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the Division of Water Resources moved to Manhattan, Kansas on June 16, 2014. Those who have seen this story in the news may have questions about where to go for technical assistance with floodplain management.

The Floodplain Team remains in Topeka at a new address. Floodplain Management Team has relocated to Forbes Field. The new address is Kansas Department of Agriculture, Topeka Field Office, 6531 SE Forbes Ave., Suite B, Topeka, KS 66619. Tom Morey and his staff all have the same telephone numbers email addresses they have always had. Come and visit us in our new location when you are in Topeka.

In this bulletin...

- **Agency Moves**
- **Lowest Floor**
- **National Conference**
- **Flood Smart**
- **Announcements**
- **Learning Opportunities**
- **Training Registration Form**

Lowest Opening and Lowest Finished Floor

In discussions about floodplain management issues local community officials often tell us that the lowest opening is at a certain level above grade. We even get letters from surveyors stating the elevation of the lowest opening without information about lowest floor or base flood elevation. Some communities have incorrectly issued floodplain development permits based on lowest opening with no other information.

Lowest finished floor is another item we hear a lot of incorrect information about. Property owners think they are in compliance when their basement is unfinished and the finished main floor is above the base flood elevation. This is a mistake that a few community officials and also some land surveyors have made.

The terms lowest finished floor and lowest opening are irrelevant when it comes to regulating the floodplain. Dean Ownby at FEMA Region VII shed some light on all of this confusion. Many years ago elevation certificates did ask for lowest finished floor. Mr. Ownby also said, "The reference to lowest finished floor is probably referring to the lowest finished enclosure." When an enclosed area below the lowest floor has 20 linear feet of interior finished wall then it becomes the lowest floor for flood insurance rating purposes.

Floodplain Managers must use the lowest floor as the standard for permitting. The definition of lowest floor should be found in every set of floodplain ordinances and resolutions. "Lowest Floor" means the lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area, including basement. An unfinished or flood-resistant enclosure, usable solely for parking of vehicles, building access, or storage, in an area other than a basement area, is not considered a building's lowest floor, provided that such enclosure is not built so as to render the structure in violation of the applicable floodproofing design requirements of the community floodplain regulation.

Please contact Steve Samuelson at 785-296-4622 for questions about permitting and regulation requirements related to the lowest floor elevation.

Association of State Floodplain Managers Conference

A group of floodplain managers from cities and counties in Kansas attended the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) annual conference in Seattle, Washington. The Kansas floodplain managers joined a group of 1,272 other flood professionals from around the world. A great opportunity to network with people from Federal agencies, engineering firms, consultants, vendors and communities like their own.

The AFPM conference always has great plenary sessions. Along with the plenary sessions there are also concurrent seminars. This year there were 8 tracks of topics for concurrent seminars to choose from.

Track 1: Showcase Sessions

Track 2: Water Resource Management

Track 3: National Flood Insurance Program

Track 4: Flood Loss Mitigation

Track 5: Levees, Dams and Barriers

Track 6; Education and Outreach

Track 7: Modeling (Riverine and Coastal)

Track 8: Floodplain Mapping

The next ASFPM conference will be in Atlanta, Georgia May 31 to June 5, 2015. You will learn a lot if you can attend this conference. Those who can't travel to Atlanta should consider attending the Kansas Association for Floodplain Management (KAFM) conference in Wichita this September.

Don Slone, Barry Fleming and Mark Vonachen share a table for a morning plenary.



Be Flood Smart

The website www.floodsmart.gov is the place to go for information about flooding. This is a consumer friendly website for use by citizens as well as floodplain managers. The following is a partial list of the many things you can do on the website.

There is a red box on the home page. Type in an address in to that box and get information about flood risk, an estimation of flood insurance premiums and list of agents trained to sell flood insurance. The agent listing gives the contact information for the agent and also the distance to the agent's office from your address.

You can watch public service announcements and other videos. There is one about a cartoon family whose house is sad because she didn't protect the family from a flood. The cartoon ends and it leads the viewer to other flood related topics.

The tool called "Cost of Flooding" is interesting. Launch the tool and insert some basic information about the size of the house and a level of flooding. You may select a flood level as low as 1" or as deep as 4'. The tool will give an itemized list of damages from the flood event you have chosen. This tool would make an excellent addition to a community website.

Another tool is called the "Levee Simulator". Launch this tool to learn how levees are designed and constructed through interactive videos. Various types of levee failures such as overtopping, seepage and breaching are demonstrated.

The website has a special section entirely for insurance agents. Topics of special interest and resources for insurance agents are found here. You won't have to be an insurance agent to find some good resources here. I use this section as a link to the Flood Insurance Manual.

For communities that are getting new flood maps there is a section of the website with information on understanding flood maps and another on undergoing a map change. There is even a flood map update schedule search engine. You can type in your zip code to find out if your community is scheduled to get a new flood map.

The website also has news about the Community Rating System, latest news about flood insurance reform legislation, and a frequently asked questions page. Take a few minutes to check out www.floodsmart.gov and you may find something you didn't know existed. There is information here that will be useful to citizens and educational information that can make a community official's job easier.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Forms

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) forms MT-EZ, MT-1 and MT-2 forms expired on February 28, 2014. There is a note on the FEMA website that says the expired forms may be used until further notice. It is suggested that you check the FEMA website to see if a new form is available the next time you have an application for a letter of map change.

Line B10 of the elevation certificate form asks for the source of the date used for base flood elevation information from line B9. Engineers and surveyors who use the Division of Water Resources website of flood elevation data should make a note in line B10. Source of data will be Other. On the blank line state source as, "State Division of Water Resources DFIRM data." Even a minor variation in this language has been questioned by some insurance companies.

Training Opportunities

The Floodplain Management Program will host the following training sessions throughout Kansas. If you are interested in any of the no-cost training opportunities, please contact Tom Morey at 785-296-5440 or Steve Samuelson at 785-296-4622. A training registration form is in this newsletter.

Post Flood Responsibilities

This free class is intended for community officials responsible for administering floodplain management regulations. The course focuses on what to do during and after a disaster event. Topics include substantial damage, permitting, Increased Cost of Compliance and violations. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Liberal - July 15, 2014 12:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

Elevation Certificates and Letters Of Map Amendment

This free class is designed for community officials responsible for administering floodplain management as well as surveyors and engineers who complete Letters Of Map Amendment (LOMA) and Elevation Certificate forms. The course will focus on accurate completion of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) technical forms, building diagrams and base flood elevation. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Chapman-October 1 2014 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Basics of the National Flood Insurance Program

This class is for officials responsible for administering their local floodplain management ordinance. The focus is on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and concepts of floodplain management, maps and studies, ordinance administration, and the relationship between floodplain management and flood insurance. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Garden City - July 16, 2014 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- McPherson - Oct. 9, 2014 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Find more information about floodplain management from Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources on line 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. If you are getting this newsletter by postal mail and would prefer email please contact Steve Samuelson at steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov.

Mark your calendar. The Kansas Association for Floodplain Management 2014 conference will be September 3 and 4 in Wichita. More information will be posted at the website: www.kafm.org. Registration will be done through a link on the website. If you have questions about registration please contact Don Slone, Chairman, at 913-667-1708.

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.

Please mail or fax your registration to:

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
6531 SE Forbes Ave., Suite B
TOPEKA, KS 66619
Fax to: 785-862-9110

For questions about training, please contact Steve Samuelson by email at steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov or by phone 785-296-4622, or contact Tom Morey at tom.morey@kda.ks.gov and 785-296-5440.

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 785-296-4622, or email steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov to report the change.

046-17
Kansas Department of Agriculture
Division of Water Resources
Topeka Field Office
Floodplain Management
6531 SE Forbes Ave., Suite B
Topeka, KS 66619

ASFPM 2015 National Conference in Atlanta

The 2015 Association of State Floodplain Managers National Conference will be May 31 to June 5, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia. This conference is an excellent opportunity for floodplain managers to receive training on mapping technologies, regulations, permitting, outreach and best practices. It is estimated the conference will be attended by more than 1,000 floodplain management professionals. This conference is great chance to meet people for networking and to learn the latest news in floodplain management. Funds may become available to subsidize attendance at this conference. Contact Tom Morey to inquire about scholarships to the ASFPM conference at 785-296-5440.

KDA/DWR Water Structures Floodplain Program Staff

Tom Morey, CFM, RS, NFIP Coordinator
Tara Lanzrath, Floodplain Mapping Specialist
Steve Samuelson, CFM, NFIP Specialist
Dane Bailey, Floodplain Mapping Coordinator

785-296-5440
785-296-2513
785-296-4622
785-296-7769

tom.morey@kda.ks.gov
tara.lanzrath@kda.ks.gov
steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov
dane.bailey@kda.ks.gov

Mailing Address:
6531 SE Forbes Ave., Suite B
Topeka, KS 66619
Fax: (785) 862-9110

www.ksda.gov/dwr