

# KANSAS

## FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

### TIPS



June 2016

#### Floodplain Leaders Course

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Silver Jackets program for Kansas and Missouri has undertaken a program to establish a flood hazard mitigation training course. The Kansas and Missouri Silver Jackets teams wished to boost understanding of flood mitigation projects by local community Floodplain Administrators.

The goal of the project is to have a course meeting once a week for about one month. Topics may include risk analysis, public engagement in risk communication, resilience, climate change and nonstructural measures as possibilities. Topics that go beyond normal regulatory subject matter. The course will sharpen skill sets and make floodplain managers into leaders. Various agencies will be able to provide guest speakers for the flood hazard mitigation topics.

Photo from a Silver Jackets Display



#### **In this bulletin...**

- **Floodplain Leaders Course**
- **Building Code Ratings**
- **Accessory Buildings**
- **Announcements**
- **Learning Opportunities**
- **Training Registration Form**

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is willing to provide an initial home for the course, if enough interest is found from the communities in their area of support. The development of a curriculum will be based on interagency feedback. Some regional planning councils already have a government training institute, similar to MARC's, and the intent of this project is to use those as leverage. The course is suggested to meet over five weeks, every Friday (perhaps) for three or four hours. The regional planning councils would determine a fee later, as well as do capacity building on a final curriculum and funding.

Brian Rast, USACE Lead Silver Jackets Coordinator for Kansas and Missouri is asking for your help to develop this course. In order to determine the subjects the course should cover it is requested that Floodplain Managers complete a survey. The on line survey can be found at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J9GN6Y5>.

The Silver Jackets program is making a great training opportunity available for community officials. Please take the on line survey in order that the courses developed align with what you need and desire for your community.

## **Rating the Nation's Building Codes**

A recent document titled, "National Building Code Assessment Report, ISO's Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule" provided overall scores for every State. The State of Kansas was tied for the worst score in the United States. A proposed Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) proposal for a disaster deductible concept suggests looking at building code scores as one proposed method of determining deductible match for communities.

There are reasons why Kansas had such a low score for the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS). Many States have statewide building codes that we don't have in Kansas. There were no BCEGS scores being given in Kansas prior to 2011. Other States were some years ahead of Kansas when it came to BCEGS. Kansas also has a relatively low percentage of communities that have adopted building codes. Many of the communities that have building codes have never had the building codes rated for a BCEGS score.

To find out more about BCEGS the author spoke with building officials in three Kansas communities that have a BCEGS score. The following information is based upon interviews with Steve Thompson from City of Shawnee, Anthony Hutchingson in Kansas City and Barry Walthall in City of Lawrence.

Having a BCEGS rating is not a simple process. To begin with, there is a long questionnaire to fill out. In one case, this was a 20 page questionnaire that took two full days to complete. The questions were about things such as the codes that are adopted and information about various inspections that are done, staffing and staff certifications. Answering the questions required research and compiling statistics.

Once the questionnaire was completed and sent back in a meeting was scheduled. The meetings were two to four hours in length. Representatives from the Insurance Service Office (ISO) met with the local building officials. During the meetings they went over many of items on the questionnaire for clarification.

After having an approved BCEGS rating communities are not finished. They have to have continued education training for the building inspection staff and building codes need to be updated periodically.

To get a BCEGS rating for a community involves staff time for the questionnaire, the meeting, training and code updates. After doing that work, the question asked was about any positive or negative aspects to having a BCEGS for their communities.

All three of the communities the author spoke with were enrolled in the Community Rating System (CRS). Having a BCEGS score allowed the citizens of these communities to have increased discounts on flood insurance. Flood insurance discounts were seen as the primary benefit related to BCEGS. Training was seen as both a positive and a negative. The negative side is that there is time and expense for staff to attend training. On the other hand, you have better trained staff as a positive aspect. One community official said that having BCEGS done made them more aware of floodplain management requirements. Another said that having BCEGS done had given them a basis to self assess their own program. BCEGS seems to be looked on as benefit to the community as a whole but of less direct benefit to the local Building Department. Having a bad score was discussed as a potential negative aspect but none of these communities had a bad score.

Communities that are interested in having their building codes rated should contact Dale Thomure, Manager Community Hazard Mitigation, ISO Commercial Property, Dale.Thmure@verisk.com, (573) 760-0350. For more information visit the website <https://www.isomitigation.com/bcegs.html> . A handout about BCEGS will also be sent by email with the electronic version of this newsletter.

Building codes increase community welfare, safety and promote sound construction. Those communities that have building codes should consider having their codes rated as an additional benefit to the citizens.

## A Problem with Sheds

Lumber yards and hardware stores are selling sheds. Small buildings that are for sale in the parking lots in front of the store. Also seeing clusters of sheds for sale on vacant lots now as a stand alone business. With easy financing and choices available, many citizens are buying sheds.

There isn't a problem with the sheds themselves. The problem arises when sheds are placed in the floodplain. A typical situation that occurs is when a property owner buys a shed without thinking about a floodplain development permit from the local community. The seller delivers a new shed on back of a truck, drops it off and leaves. There is now a shed in the floodplain without proper permits from Division of Water Resources or the local community.

As a non-residential structure, a shed can be elevated or flood protected. An elevated shed would need a survey to show the level it is elevated to. Floodproofing measures would need to be documented on a Non-Residential Floodproofing Certificate which has requirements for the walls to be substantially impermeable to water and a list of other requirements to be certified by an engineer or architect.

It is recognized that it will likely cost more than a shed is worth to hire an engineer. "Technical Bulletin 7-93 Wet Floodproofing Requirements for Structures Located in Special Flood Hazard Areas in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program" provides wet floodproofing as an alternative. Here is a link to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website with all of the technical bulletins:  
<http://www.fema.gov/media-library/resources-documents/collections/4> .

The technical bulletin spells out criteria for allowing a variance from normal floodproofing procedures for wet floodproofing of an accessory structure, such as a small low cost shed. Sheds must have flood openings, be anchored so they won't float away, comply with encroachment requirements when located in the floodway, be used for limited parking or storage, any mechanical or utilities be elevated or floodproofed to above the base flood elevation and any parts of the structure below the base flood elevation must be constructed of floodproofed materials. Kansas has a one foot freeboard requirement on top of what is stated in the technical bulletin.

Find out more about flood resistant materials for sheds by reviewing "Technical Bulletin 2, Flood Damage-Resistant Materials Requirements for Buildings Located in Special Flood Hazard Areas in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program". Learn more about flood openings in, "Technical Bulletin 1, Openings in Foundation Walls and Walls of Enclosures." The "Kansas Quick Guide" includes information on wet flood protection measures for sheds as well. The requirements for sheds are pretty clearly defined.

The shed that suddenly appears in the special flood hazard area is seldom anchored properly. The materials used to construct the shed are not always appropriate flood resistant material. Floors made of particle board are common. Haven't seen a shed for sale yet with flood openings already installed. Sellers resist installing flood openings in a financed rent-to-own shed. Floodplain Managers for local communities are then forced to send violation notices to owners of sheds in the floodplain.

Here is one method to try and get ahead of a problem with sheds in floodplain. Send certified letters to all of the sellers of sheds in your jurisdiction. Inform the sellers of the permit requirements in the floodplain. At same time, inform them of permits outside of the floodplain and zoning or setback issues. Ask sellers to inform their clients to contact your office before putting a shed on a property. In situations where that doesn't happen you'll have an unhappy property owner who gets a violation notice. The common phrase heard is, "Why wasn't I told?" You can shift some of the property owner's anger back on to the seller who failed to inform his client of the permit requirements. Get past that anger and frustration and you can move forward with dealing with the shed and the permit.

## **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.

- Fredonia - July 14, 2016 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### **Violations and Enforcement in the Floodplain**

This free class is intended for community officials responsible for enforcing floodplain management regulations. The course will focus on various types of violations, how to correct violations and enforcement procedures. Approved 3.5 hours toward CFM. Limited to 20 participants.

- Overland Park– Oct. 4, 2016 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.

- Council Grove - Oct. 12, 2016 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](mailto:steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov).

Mark your calendar. The Kansas Association for Floodplain Management 2016 conference will be September 7 and 8 in Mulvane. More information will be posted at the website: [www.kafm.org](http://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: 785-296-7155

For questions about training, please contact Steve Samuelson by email at [steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov](mailto:steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov) or by phone 785-296-4622, or contact Tom Morey at [tom.morey@kda.ks.gov](mailto: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](mailto:steve.samuelson@kda.ks.gov) to report the change.

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

### **ASFPM 2016 National Conference in Grand Rapids**

The 2016 Association of State Floodplain Managers National Conference will be June 19-24, 2016 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. 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 a great chance to meet people for networking and to learn the latest news in floodplain management. Preparations are also underway for the 2017 Annual Conference in Kansas City. Stay tuned for more information on opportunities for this conference.

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

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