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Inside this Issue

- 1 New STARR Website
- 1 Expanded Appeals Process
- 2 Levee Policy Update
- 2 Guidelines & Specs Update
- 2 CRS Users Groups
- 3 Training Opportunities

Strategic Alliance for Risk Reduction
FEMA Region X Service Center
20700 44th Avenue West, Suite 110
Lynnwood, Washington 98036
(425) 329-3699

News from Region X

The screenshot shows the STARR website interface. At the top is the STARR logo and the tagline 'STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR RISK REDUCTION'. Below this is a large photograph of a flooded street with three people in safety gear. A navigation menu includes links for STARR, About Us, Special Projects, Contacts, LOMRs, FEMA Region Workspaces, Resources, and Help. A central text block states: 'STARR, the Strategic Alliance for Risk Reduction is comprised of four proven leaders, with core services in: DFIRM Mapping and Adoption, Risk Assessment, Mitigation Planning, Risk Communication and Outreach'. Below this are three main content sections: 'STARR EVENTS' listing the website launch and FloodMap Desktop 10 Beta release; 'PROJECT MAP' featuring a map of FEMA regions with Region X highlighted; and 'TOOLS' featuring 'FLOODMAP DESKTOP™' as a free download. A 'FEMA NEWS' section and 'HELPFUL LINKS' are also visible at the bottom.

STARR Announces New Website

STARR is very proud to announce the launch of our new SharePoint website. The site provides timely information from each of the four FEMA Regions that we support (I, V, VII, and X) and our readers will be especially interested in the Region X workspace, which contains regional announcements, project and study updates, important documents, and a calendar of upcoming events and training opportunities. There are also links to FEMA news and related websites.

Newsletter Archives

We are especially happy to add that the monthly newsletter will be now posted to this site for your convenience.

We invite you to check it out and please let us know what you think. The address is www.starr-team.com.

Changes to FEMA's Appeals Process

FEMA has expanded the due-process procedures for new or modified Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) and base flood depths to other new or modified flood hazard information shown on a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), including the addition or modification of any Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) boundary or zone designation, or regulatory floodway.

The new guidance is effective as of December 1, and applies to certain in-progress and all future flood studies and Physical Map Revisions (PMRs). Specifically it will apply to all flood studies and PMRs for which preliminary

Continued on next page



Appeals Process *(continued)*

and certain revised preliminary FIRMs and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports are issued on or after December 1. It will also apply to all flood studies and PMRs for which a proposed flood hazard determination (formerly called a Proposed Rule) is published in the Federal Register on or after December 1, 2011. It will not apply to flood studies and PMRs for which preliminary FIRMs and FISs were issued prior to December 1, 2011, nor for which a statutory 90-day appeal period not required at the time of issuance. The guidance also applies to Letters of Map Revision (LOMRs) that reflect updated flood hazards issued on or after December 1, 2011.

Under the new policy, the addition/modification of BFEs/base flood depths or any change in SFHA boundary, floodway delineation, or zone designation requires a statutory 90-day appeal period and the fulfillment of the additional due process notification requirements outlined in the National Flood Insurance Program regulations.

Federal Register publications and other public notices identifying appealable FIRM changes will be simplified under the Expanded Appeals Process and will no longer include specific flooding source names or BFE listings; instead links to online preliminary Flood Insurance Studies (FISs) and FIRMs and LOMR documents will be included in the notices to allow users to better understand the changes being made to their community's FIS and FIRM.

For more detailed information on the Expanded Appeals Process, refer to FEMA Procedure Memorandum 57, 1.usa.gov/pmemo57, or email RegionXHelpDesk@Starr-Team.com.

Region X Help Desk

If you have a question for the folks at Region X, ask us! Our email address is RegionXHelpDesk@starr.team.com

Levee Policy Update

There has been no change to the official status of the proposed changes to the levee policy. The proposed changes are still under internal review. We hope to have news of the public comment period in the near future. In addition to FEMA's website, 1.usa.gov/femalamp, STARR will also be posting news about the start of the 45-day public comment period and the webinars FEMA will be hosting to explain the changes to communities and mapping partners. Check the STARR site often, www.starr-team.com. We will post updates there as soon as we have the scoop.

Updates to Guidelines and Specifications for Mapping Partners

FEMA has released the new Appendix L and Appendix K documents. These documents provide the guidelines and specifications required for DFIRM database creation and DFIRM cartographic standards. The new documents have been refined for the RiskMAP program and replace the existing Map Modernization guidelines.

Users will find that most items previously detailed in *Appendix M: Data Capture Standards* have been moved to Appendix L. There are many new tables and features that are included in the new database standard. The Flood Insurance Study (FIS) is generated almost entirely from information in the Appendix L database.

Appendix K has also changed significantly, with more relaxed cartographic specifications and an entirely new DFIRM Panel layout. The symbology for almost all layers has changed and new labeling rules designed to increase efficiency for the panel production process.

Appendix L now details requirements for

engineering data submittals (previously in Appendix M), so users who may have not used Appendix L will now be required to do so. It is recommended that anyone involved in the floodplain mapping process should review these documents to ensure they understand the new guidelines.

The updated appendices can be downloaded from the FEMA library, 1.usa.gov/femagands.

Interested in a Community Rating System Users Group?



A CRS users group is an informal organization of people interested in the Community Rating System. The organization is usually of people from the same metropolitan area, but there are multi-county and state-wide users groups, too.

Users groups meet and talk and share good ideas, typically meeting every month or every two months. Sometimes they arrange a presentation through their ISO/CRS Specialist and sometimes one or more members will talk about how they implement an activity. When possible, the area's ISO/CRS Specialist will attend and sometimes they can bring in a CRS technical reviewer or other national expert on a CRS activity.

Users groups around the country have sponsored webinars on the latest changes in line for the 2012 CRS Coordinator's Manual. Several have submitted formal comments that have made an impact on the proposed changes.

If you would like to participate in a users group for your area, contact the Region X ISO/CRS Specialist, Marlene Jacobs, [mjacob@iso.com](mailto:mjacobs@iso.com), or Debbie Cahoon, Users Group Liaison, debbie.cahoon@yahoo.com.

RiskMAP
Increasing Resilience Together

December Training

Magnitude 9.0 Paradigm Shift: Post-Disaster Reconnaissance of Tohoku, Japan

December 7th, 10:00 AM

This presentation will highlight the catastrophic impacts from a M9.0 earthquake and tsunami to coastal areas of northeast Japan. Discussion will address the loss of emergency and other government functions and observations from the perspective of a local emergency manager from Oregon. Will Oregon make this paradigm shift before the coming Cascadia event?

Presenter: Jay Wilson, Hazard Mitigation Coordinator, Clackamas County, Oregon

CRS Webinars

December 13, 8:00 am – 11:00 am
December 15, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

FEMA and the Insurance Service Office (ISO) will be sponsoring webinars in December to help community officials become familiar with the upcoming changes to the Community Rating System (CRS) Coordinator's Manual.

Presenter: French Wetmore, ISO

FEMA E-74 Reducing Non-Structural Damages from Earthquakes

December 13, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Nonstructural components of buildings include all elements that are not part of the structural system; that is, the architectural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, as well as furniture,

fixtures, equipment, and other contents. During the recent earthquakes in Chile, New Zealand, Japan, Virginia and other earlier earthquakes in California, Washington, and other parts of the U.S.,

nonstructural failures have accounted for the majority of damage and injuries. In many cases, businesses, schools, hospitals, and other organizations had to spend excessive time and money for clean up and repair due to nonstructural failures, therefore impeding continued operations and rapid recovery.

This FEMA-sponsored 1 ½ hour webinar describes the sources and types of nonstructural earthquake damage and the effective methods and guidance that individuals and organizations can use to take action now before the next earthquake and minimize future injuries and property losses from nonstructural risks

Elevation Certificates

December 15, 10:00am – Noon

This two-hour webinar will review the proper way to complete FEMA Form 81-31 and best practices for using the Elevation Certificate in the floodplain development review process.

Topics will include the basics of the Elevation Certificate form, the 10 building diagrams, the difference between “bottom floor” and “lowest floor”, the “Top 10 Mistakes” made by surveyors and local officials, and more.

Two (2) CECs for CFMs. Registration is free, and required for credit.

Presenter: Becca Croft, STARR RSC X

For more information about upcoming training opportunities, visit our website, www.starr-team.com.

Training Opportunities

(All times are PST)

Magnitude 9.0 Paradigm Shift: Post-Disaster Reconnaissance of Tohoku, Japan

December 7, 10:00am
hkandathil@crew.org

CRS Webinars

December 13, 8:00 am – 11:00 am
December 15, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
www.crs2012.org – 1 CEC

Reducing Non-Structural Damages from Earthquakes

December 13, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
February 14, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
fema-nehrlp@dhs.gov

Elevation Certificates

December 15, 10:00am – Noon
Online* – 2 CECs

Two-Year Preferred Risk Policy Eligibility Extension

January 19, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Online* – 1 CEC

Hazard Mitigation Planning

January 20, 10:00am – 11:00 am
Online* – 1 CEC

Why Hydrology Matters

January 27, 10:00am – 11:00 am
Online* – 1 CEC

*To register for online courses, visit STARR's training site online at j.mp/starrtraining, or email RXTraining@starr-team.com.

Do you have questions, comments, or suggestions about the Region X Newsletter?

If you have anything to share with us about the contents of this newsletter publication, or have suggestions for future articles, please email the FEMA Region X Service Center. The address is RXNewsletter@starr-team.com.



Happy Holidays!

RiskMAP
Increasing Resilience Together