



KAM K. MOVASSAGHI
SECRETARY

Louisiana



FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT FACTSHEET

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A Quarterly Report issued by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Floodplain Management Regulations Section

HURRICANE SEASON JUNE 1 - NOVEMBER 30

hur-ri-cane (hûr'î-kân) n. A severe tropical cyclone with winds exceeding approximately 119 kilometers per hour, or 74 miles per hour, originating in the tropical regions of the Atlantic Ocean or Caribbean Sea, traveling north, northwest, or northeast from its point of origin, and usually involving heavy rains. [Sp. *huracan* < Carib.] (Second College Edition, The American Heritage Dictionary)

If you have lived in Louisiana for any amount of time, you know the effects from a hurricane. Throughout this issue you will find what we hope will be useful information to help us survive another hurricane season.

2001 Atlantic Hurricane Names

Allison *
Barry
Chantal
Dean
Erin
Felix
Gabrielle

Humberto
Iris
Jerry
Karen
Lorenzo
Michelle
Noel

Olga
Pablo
Rebekah
Sebastien
Tanya
Van
Wendy

* The General Public can call 1-800-462-9029 to process an application for assistance.

WELCOME HORNBECK

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the Town of Hornbeck (Vernon Parish) as Louisiana's newest member of the National Flood Insurance Program. Hornbeck joined the emergency phase of the program on May 8, 2001 making them the 287th community to belong to the NFIP in Louisiana.

Hornbeck's mayor is the Honorable Clarence Beebe and the town clerk is Brenda Hilton.

TIME FOR A CHANGE!

The Floodplain Management Section (Janet, Cindy, Sandra and Sue) is considering a name change for the *Floodplain Management Factsheet*. We are asking you, our faithful readers, for help.

If you have a suggestion, please let us know via U.S. Mail to The Floodplain Management Section, Section 64, P. O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245 or email to jgriffin@dotdmail.dotd.state.la.us.

the difference between

WATCHES

and

WARNINGS

A National Weather Service **WATCH** is a message indicating that conditions favor the occurrence of a certain type of hazardous weather. For example, a severe thunderstorm watch means that a severe thunderstorm is expected in the next 6 hours or so within an area approximately 120-150 miles wide and 300-400 miles long. The NWS Storm Prediction Center issues such watches. Local NWS forecast offices issue other watches 12 to 36 hours in advance of a possible hazardous-weather or flooding event. Each local forecast office usually covers a state or a portion of a state.

A National Weather Service **WARNING** indicates that a hazardous event is occurring or is imminent in about 30 minutes to an hour. Local NWS forecast offices issue warnings on a parish-by-parish basis.

. . .the rule for being safe is simple: head for higher ground and stay away from flood waters.

Taken from website: www.fema.gov/pte/talkdiz/flood.htm

The name hurricane is derived from the Caribbean God of Evil, Hurican. The unpredictable behavior, high seas, and devastating winds have been our nemesis for centuries.



COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM CORNER



REVERIFICATION

Seventeen CRS communities will be receiving a reverification visit during 2001. The purpose of this visit is to determine if the community has been accomplishing the requirements of the activities for which they applied.

If you are due a visit, you should review your application and the CRS manual to determine what paperwork will be needed. The required documentation should be submitted to your ISO Specialist during the reverification visit. Documentation requirements for the various *Activities* are:

Documentation Requirements

Activity 310 – Elevation Certificates:

Available for review.

Activity 320 – Map Information:

Documentation that shows how the service was publicized.
Mailing list of institutions and agencies that were notified of this service.

A record or log noting the date and the address or location of the property in question.

Documentation showing how the FIRM is kept updated.

Activity 330 Outreach Projects:

Copies of the notices, flyers, and other materials used in the outreach projects.

Documentation that shows when the projects are undertaken.

Activity 350 – Flood Protection Library:

A statement from the head of the library that lists the documents available in the library.

Activity 360 – Flood Protection Assistance:

A copy of the document the community used to publicize the service.

A description of the technical qualifications of the persons

providing the assistance.

A list of the names of contractors or consultants and/or a copy of the material the community provides on how to select a contractor.

Records noting the date and person assisted and the type of assistance provided.

Activity 500 – Repetitive Loss:

Corrected Repetitive Loss list sheets with appropriate documentation for property protection and buildings removed.

Map showing the location of the repetitive loss properties.

Cause of repetitive loss for each repetitive loss area

Copy of the outreach project sent to all properties in the repetitive loss areas.

Activity 540 – Drainage System Maintenance:

The procedures, instructions, or other documents that explain the community's routine inspection and debris removal program.

Documentation demonstrating that the maintenance was performed according to the procedures submitted.

This is also an excellent opportunity to modify if your community has undertaken new activities since the last reverification visit.

Phil Anderson, Louisiana's ISO Specialist has noticed a recurring problem in Activity 310, Elevation Certificates. The community must review the elevation certificates to ensure that the information is **complete** and **correct**. You can find a detailed explanation of what is required as you complete and review the first page of the elevation certificate on pages four and five of our December 2000 Factsheet. *The back page of the certificate is explained on pages four and five of this current Factsheet. (June 2001)*

Reverification will affect communities which applied to the CRS in 1991. Notification of your visit will be received in the near future. If you have any questions, you can contact this office at (225) 274-4354.

**Pages 4 and 5 are the instructions to
complete Page 2 of the
FEMA Elevation Certificate.**

**For an 11x17 printed version
of the EC and instructions, please
contact us at 225-274-4354.**

VARIANCES

“To Grant or Not To Grant; That Is the Question”

Ever since I took over the job of Public Works Analyst for the Parish there has been one truth stated to me by my NFIP Coordinator (Ms. Janet Griffin) concerning the issuing of a Variance. Her resounding response has been “DON’T DO IT” and I would like to relay to you why I have found this to be sound advice.

It all started with the gentleman that I replaced. During his daily travels over the many roads within the parish he discovered a new home being constructed in the rural area of the parish. Being a diligent clone of Janet; he stopped and phoned the office to find out if we had a permit for the structure. Surprise, surprise, the owner had overlooked this minor step since he wasn’t inside the city. Well, the owner was then instructed to contact our office and given the necessary instructions on how to obtain a permit. Amazing the owner somehow had obtained electrical service without a permit (that’s another can of worms).

Upon checking further inspection it was discovered he was also building in a floodplain! He was informed that the structure must comply with existing ordinances; unfortunately the structure was slab on grade and approximately 70 – 80 percent complete. Needless to say the owner was not a happy camper; so he decided to take it higher. That is when the NFIP Coordinator came to our aide to back us up. Owner was informed compliance was not optional but mandatory and that the structure had to be raised or could be used for “storage”. Cutting a long story the owner gave in and complied to existing ordinances and refinanced his home for elevation (only after he found out that flood insurance would cost him approximately \$7,000.00 a year).

Once again comes the question “To grant or Not To grant” a variance. First owner requested a variance and it was denied. A second gentleman decided to replace an old mobile home that his grandparents had owned with a new double wide for himself. When he tried to get electrical service he was informed that he must contact the Parish for a “Utility Permit”. When he called the Parish he was informed that this is considered new construction and he must obtain a “Development Permit” for the mobile home placement. Following established procedures the owner was informed that his property was located within a floodplain and that the mobile home must be elevated. Elevation would be 8 feet; but the owner said it couldn’t be done and wanted to request a variance since this would require him to be higher than the surrounding homes. All necessary information was presented to the Parish Commission (Police Jury) along with a recommendation to deny the variance. The Commission decided to “Grant” the variance and it was passed by a 10 – 2 vote.

Upon learning that a variance was granted for the mobile home the owner of the first structure chose to sue the Parish because he was denied a variance. He couldn’t understand why he was denied; when he was building a \$100,000.00 home but it was given for a \$50,000.00 mobile home. Both properties are located with in the same area of Township and Range. Owner has sued the Parish for approximately \$250,000.00 (cost of refinancing, elevation, and damages). Owner claims that the policies were not followed in a consistent manner and applied fairly. Parish is appealing the case.

Variations – “To Grant or Not To Grant”. The answer is “Don’t Do It”; and if you do decide to grant one - make sure that you apply the same rules to everyone. **One exception to the rules can be very costly!**

This article was submitted by James Demochet, Caddo Parish

ENCLOSURES

Under 44 CFR 60.3, the regulations for the National Flood Insurance Program allow enclosures below the base flood elevation (BFE). The problem is trying to remember the How, When, Where, What and Why of permitting enclosures.

The When, Where and Why are easy. When is any time there is a request for new construction or substantial improvement, Where is for development in the Special Flood Hazard Area, and Why is to reduce flood damages. Once we have answered these questions, we are left with **WHAT** and **HOW**.

WHAT, of course, is a request to enclose an area below the base flood elevation (BFE). The process begins with determining if the enclosure is below the lowest floor of the structure or if it is a non-residential structure.

Non-residential is a structure whose intended use is other than for living purposes, such as a commercial building, storage shed, metal building, or public building.

HOW: If the enclosure is below the lowest floor, the NFIP regulations state that enclosures below the lowest floor shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwaters. It must be developed or designed to meet or exceed the following minimum criteria:

1. a minimum of two openings having a total net area of not less than one square inch for every square foot of enclosed area subject to flooding
2. the bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one foot above grade
3. can be equipped with screens, louvers, valves or other coverings or devices provided they permit the automatic entry and exit of floodwaters.

4. unfinished or constructed with flood-resistant materials.

Non-residential structures have two (2) choices: (a) they can be elevated to the BFE or (b) be dry floodproofed. The NFIP regulations for enclosed areas of non-residential structures below the BFE are required to:

- (i) have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated to or above the base flood level or
- (ii) together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, be designed so that below the base flood level the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy as certified by a registered professional engineer or architect.

After all of this, what should you remember? Areas below the lowest floor can have openings if the criteria is complied with and are to be used for parking, storage or building access only. Non-residential structures can be elevated to meet the BFE or be certified as dry floodproofed with a Floodproofing Certificate on file along with the permit.

For further clarification, see Technical Bulletin 1-93. All technical bulletins can be ordered by calling 1-800-480-2520 or our office at (225) 274-4354.

TORNADOES

Hurricanes can produce tornadoes that add to the storm's destructive power. Tornadoes are most likely to occur in the right-front quadrant of the hurricane.

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW/index.htm>

**Contacts in the
Floodplain Management Section:
(225) 274-4354**

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For those interested in being included on our mailing list for future copies of the *Factsheet*, please fill out the following information blank and mail it to the Dept. of Transportation and Development, Floodplain Management, Section 64, Post Office Box 94245, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245 or fax to (225) 274-4351.

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