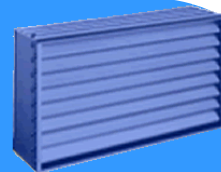


FLOOD VENTS

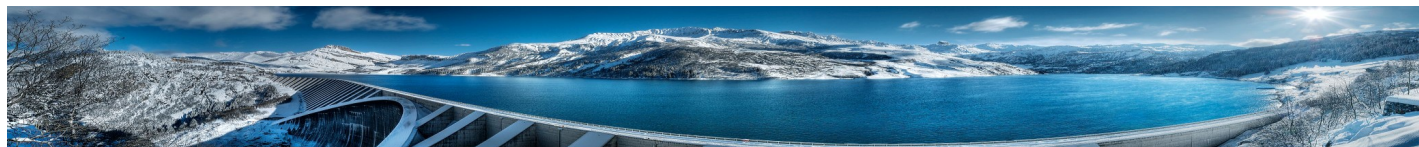
The Official Update of the Rhode Island Floodplain Management Program



Volume 3, Issue 1

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Welcome to ***Flood Vents***, the quarterly issued floodplain newsletter from the Rhode Island Floodplain Management Program.



FEMA Seeks Comment on New Levee Mapping Process

As part of ongoing efforts to reform the National Flood Insurance Program, FEMA has been working to revise their process for mapping flood risk with respect to levees. They have explored a number of scenarios to address the one percent-annual-chance flood risk in the vicinity of levees and evaluated multiple approaches through extensive stakeholder, independent, technical, and public input. As a result, the agency is proposing a [new levee mapping process](#) and is seeking comment. Comments are due by January 30, 2012.

NGS Releases Report for Floodplain Mapping Pilot Project

To help prepare for the transition to new datums in 2022 (approximately), NOAA's National Geodetic Survey (NGS) partnered with FEMA, the North Carolina Floodplain Mapping Program, and the North Carolina Geodetic Survey on a pilot project to examine the effects of this transition on floodplain mapping. "[The Effect of Modernizing the National Datums on Floodplain Mapping](#)" (41 pp.) reports on the project.

New NHC Publication Provides Introduction to Storm Surge

NOAA's National Hurricane Center (NHC) has produced a new publication about storm surge. "[Introduction to Storm Surge](#)" (5 pp.) explains storm surge, what causes it, the factors that influence it, how it is observed and measured, and its contribution to total water level.

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FEMA Provides Access to National Flood Hazard Layer in Google Earth

FEMA offers [two applications](#) that allow users to access information from the National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) in Google Earth. FEMA NFHL allows users to view custom combinations of flood hazard information, including flood hazard zones, floodways, Coastal Barrier Resources System and otherwise Protected Area units, community boundaries and names, base flood elevations, and more. Stay Dry is a simpler, focused application that provides basic flood hazard map information from the NFHL for an address.

Download installation instructions for FEMA NFHL using Google Earth [here](#)

Active 2011 Hurricane Season Breaks Hurricane Amnesia

The 2011 Atlantic hurricane season produced 19 tropical storms, seven of which became hurricanes, including three major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher). This level of activity matched NOAA's predictions and continues the trend of active hurricane seasons that began in 1995. The 19 tropical storms represent the third-highest total (tied with 1887, 1995, and 2010) since records began in 1851 and is well above the average of 11. However, the number of hurricanes and major hurricanes is only slightly above the average of six and two, respectively. Irene was the lone hurricane to hit the United States in 2011 and was the most significant tropical cyclone to strike the Northeast since Hurricane Bob in 1991.

Read the complete article [here](#)

Certified Floodplain Manager 2012 Exam

CFM Refresher Course: April 18, 2012 9AM—1PM

CFM Exam: April 25, 2012 9AM—12PM

Both events will be held at Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
645 New London Avenue Cranston, RI

Please contact [Michelle Burnett](#) to register



Upcoming Events

New England Coastal Hazards Resilience Webinar

January 25, 2012, 12 -1:30PM

This webinar will examine why there is an increasing need for freeboard, both under current and future conditions; how to use incentives and/or regulation to encourage or require the application of freeboard in construction; and what obstacles communities have encountered to elevating homes above the FEMA minimum requirement.

Learn how to join the webinar [here](#)

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

6th Annual RIFMA Conference - April 24, 2012

“Goodnight Irene - Mitigating For the Next Disaster”

Irene was the first hurricane to hit the U.S. since Ike in September 2008 and was the most significant tropical system to make a direct landfall in the Northeast since Hurricane Bob in 1991. Irene first struck the U.S. as a Category 1 hurricane in eastern North Carolina, then moved northward along the Mid-Atlantic Coast. Wind damage in coastal North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland was moderate, with considerable damage resulting from falling trees and power lines. Irene made its final landfall as a tropical storm in the New York City area and dropped torrential rainfall in the Northeast that caused widespread flooding. More than 7 million homes and businesses lost power during the storm, and Irene caused at least 45 deaths and more than \$7.3 billion in damages.

The Rhode Island Flood Mitigation Association will convene its 6th annual gathering on April 24, 2012. This year’s conference theme will focus on the variety of impacts Hurricane Irene had on the Northeast. This “Call for Abstracts” seeks a broad range of professionals to address presentations focusing on Irene; before, during and after the event. Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- a. Coastal and/or riverine impacts
- b. Utility impacts
- c. Existing mitigation efforts; did they hold up during the event
- d. Lessons learned

Please submit a 250-300 word abstract no later than February 6th to:

michelle.f.burnett@us.army.mil



New Coastal DFIRMs

Representatives from RIEMA, STARR and FEMA held full-day review meetings from December 7-9th. Town and city representatives from Kent, Newport, Providence and Washington were allocated an hour for an initial review of the new DFIRMs and provided a copy for continued internal review. Bristol data will be available in the coming months and the work map meetings will be scheduled accordingly. These individualized meetings served as a follow-up to initial outreach that was conducted in 2010. Data presented in those meetings were revised and integrated into the current DFIRM work maps prepared by STARR staff.

Barring any major map revision requests from the participants, the distribution of preliminary maps is expected in February. After a series of community meetings and ordinance adoptions, it is expected that the new DFIRMs for Kent, Newport, Providence and Washington counties will be effective by spring 2013. Additionally, several non-regulatory aids were introduced to the communities that will provide visual representation of changes since the last FIRM maps for the public.

Twilight Seminar Series

New Rhode Island Coastal Studies and Remapping

February 28, 2012, 6-8PM

RIFMA will be host an evening seminar at the Towers, 35 Ocean Road, Narragansett RI

Cost: \$25 for RIFMA Members, \$35 for non-members and light refreshments will be provided.

Brian Caufield, a Coastal Engineer and Project Manager from STARR, will present on the forthcoming coastal DFIRMs. The presentation will provide attendees with study details and potential impacts associated with the anticipated map changes. Brian will also be discussing the non-regulatory aids highlighted in the article above.

Registration will be available soon

Please direct additional questions to michelle.f.burnett@us.army.mil

Flood Vents is a product of the Rhode Island Floodplain Management Program