

# Introduction to Floodplain Management

Congratulations on your position as floodplain manager for your community. Your position is vital to your community and can result in actually saving the lives of some of your citizens. In addition, you will be protecting businesses, property, and in many cases the very livelihood of your community.

Many new floodplain managers have requested training to assist in learning their new responsibilities. The most complete training for a floodplain manager is FEMA's E273: Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program course (see information on E-273 at the end of this introduction). Yet because the E-273 course is only offered a few times a year, it may be many months before you have an opportunity to attend this course. Therefore, we at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) have explored Independent Study opportunities to provide you the training you need today in order to have success in your position now.

## First Step:

As a new Floodplain Manager, you certainly want to know about your position. There are some basic skills you will need to acquire, but first let's secure a foundational understanding of the floodplain program and why your new position is so important to your community.

## Iowa Videos:

Iowa has some excellent training videos. Begin by watching the **first two** videos. Each of the videos is approximately 5 minutes. They do a superb job of expressing the purpose of your job: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/floodinginiowa/>

Note the participant manual in the bottom left corner of the screen. Though it is not necessary, it may be helpful.

## Nebraska Videos:

Next, understand the Nebraska perspective. Watch these **two** Nebraska videos: <http://dnr.nebraska.gov/fpm/floodplain-videos>

## Your Ordinance:

After you get a basic overview, the best 'Regulation Training' is to read your local floodplain ordinance and the associated definitions. As you read through your ordinance, make special note of the definition for 'Development'. With that definition most things done in a floodplain will require a permit from you.

Also, note a couple of areas where Nebraska has a higher standard than other states:

- Nebraska requires **one foot of freeboard** above the Base flood elevation.
- For areas in the Floodway (if applicable):
  - No new structures for human habitation.
  - Development must demonstrate no rise for the base flood in the floodway.

### **Your Flood Data:**

Your community should have a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) and may have a Flood Insurance Study (FIS). You should review and become familiar with these sources of flood risk information. If you do not have the information or aren't sure, there are two core resources you can use to find the information:

Nebraska Floodplain Interactive Map:

<http://dnr.nebraska.gov/fpm/using-the-floodplain-interactive-map>

FEMA Map Service Center (MSC):

<http://msc.fema.gov>

### **Next Step:**

You should now have a pretty good understanding of floodplain management and your own responsibilities. One of the most basic skills your position requires is the ability to read, understand, and interpret your Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).

### **Iowa Videos:**

The Iowa videos do a great job of explaining the FIRMs. I recommend you watch the Iowa **videos 8-10** (reference link above). You may have noticed that we skipped videos 3-7. *These are very good videos and very beneficial to you as floodplain manager.* Yet, our objective here is to provide you with the **minimum training** we recommend for you as a new floodplain manager. As time permits, you will want to watch all 21 of the Iowa videos.

### **FEMA Training:**

These two FEMA mapping tutorials go into more detail than the Iowa videos and are both prerequisites to the E-273 course.

[http://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/tutorials/ot\\_firm.swf](http://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/tutorials/ot_firm.swf)

[http://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/tutorials/ot\\_fis.swf](http://www.floodmaps.fema.gov/tutorials/ot_fis.swf)

### **General Resources:**

- NDNR Floodplain Management - <http://www.dnr.nebraska.gov/fpm/>
- NDNR Desk Reference - <http://www.dnr.nebraska.gov/fpm/digital-desk-reference>
  - o Includes many key reference documents, the elevation certificate form, and relevant state statutes.

## **E273: Managing Floodplain Development through the National Flood Insurance Program**

The most complete training for a floodplain manager is the E-273 class which equips you with all the basic information that you need to be a Floodplain Manager. It is offered at the National Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg, MD and from time to time is also offered in Nebraska or at FEMA Region VII in Kansas City. If you go to Emmitsburg, FEMA will pay for all your travel, your room will be provided, and your only expense is a meal ticket for the week (approximately \$125.00). If you take a field deployed course in Nebraska or Kansas City, you will have to pay the hotel and meal expenses; however, there is an advantage as the course is more focused on local issues and points of discussion. Either way, this is a very valuable course.

E-273: <https://training.fema.gov/emcourses/crsdetail.aspx?cid=E273&ctype=R>

**This class fills up quickly- register soon.** Any registration not received 30 days before the class is not even considered. Dates and registration forms can be found at:

<https://training.fema.gov/emcourses/schedules.aspx>

- Type "273" in the "Course" box and hit enter.
- Choose the date that you wish to attend and click on the link in the 'Apply' (last) column.
  - Fill out the form
  - Print it
  - Sign it (after 21d.),
  - Have your commissioner, mayor, or supervisor sign box 22a.
    - Submit it to:

Dave Reisen  
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency  
2433 NW 24th Street  
Lincoln, NE 68524-1801

Or digitally to:

[dave.reisen@nebraska.gov](mailto:dave.reisen@nebraska.gov)