



DNR

The Floodplain Manager



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See us at:

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Record rainfall floods homes, cars



Photo by Thomas W. Kopp

The yards of homes in the Bridge Pointe section of Shadowmoss were flooded in Friday's heavy rain.

BY PRENTISS FINDLAY/ The Post and Courier Charleston.Net

CHARLESTON, October 26, 2008 - Some West Ashley residents were driven from their homes Saturday, October 25 by flooding from record-setting rain that flooded streets and stalled cars the night before. Roads were impassable and motorists were stranded as eight inches of rain fell in the tri-county area until just past midnight.

"It looks like Hugo," said Donald Bartlett, president of Bridge Pointe Homeowners Association. Bartlett said there was six inches of standing water in the development of 32 townhomes in Shadowmoss. The Bridge Pointe flooding started around 9 p.m. Friday. "It was almost like a huge wave came this way," Bartlett said. He blamed what he called an improperly installed drainage pipe that has been a point of contention between Bridge Pointe homeowners and the city of Charleston.

Charleston International Airport recorded 6.57 inches of rain, eclipsing the old record for the date of 2.38 inches set in 2007. The record for October was 4.48 inches set on October 11, 1990, according to The National Weather Service. Slightly more than eight inches of rain was reported in Mount Pleasant and McClellanville. "It annihilated the old record," said Steve Rowley, meteorologist for the National Weather Service.

Low-lying areas in downtown Charleston were hip-deep in some places, stranding dozens of motorists. Tow trucks cruised around the Medical University of South Carolina, dragging cars that had stalled. One driver said he assisted 65 people. Some cars still had not been reclaimed.

Up to three feet of flooding reported around Summerville caused stalled cars and blocked roads, according to the Weather Service. The Weather Channel reported water inside Northwoods Mall and several cars floating in the parking lot.

See FLOODING on page 2

A Message from the SC National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator



Lisa Jones, SC NFIP Coordinator

Dear Fellow Floodplain Coordinators,

With the introduction of the ordinance tool, South Carolina no longer has a “state model” ordinance. We received funding from a FEMA grant to develop the tool to accomplish the following goals:

- Have communities *think* about their flood hazard by answering a series of questions concerning their flood hazards
- Make sure that an ordinance produced is minimally compliant;
- Decrease our ordinance review time;
- Automate the ordinance checklist.

This tool went live in September and is available on our website. I encourage you to experiment with it and explore. We will be making improvements as we go along, so if you have comments, please forward them to me at jonesls@dnr.sc.gov. Comments will be considered for the next revision. While this change may be difficult at first, in the long run it will improve the ordinance adoption process. Thank you for your cooperation.

Kindest Regards,
Lisa Jones, CFM
State NFIP Coordinator

Year-round stocking stuffers help in disasters



Photo courtesy of Paul Schirotekat, Designer

Christmas has passed, but it’s never too late for gift giving. As we spring into the new year, consider giving your loved ones some gifts that will help keep them safe during emergencies. Here are some creative gift ideas:

- A year-long flood insurance policy;
- Gift certificates for first aid training and first aid kit
- Disaster kits for home & office;
- Car emergency kits: escape hammer, flares, distress flags; ice scrapers,
- LED flashlights with extra batteries;
- Hand cranked flashlight and hazard radio;
- All purpose knife;
- Pet disaster kits: food, water, leashes, dishes and carrying case or crate.

These gifts may not be as glamorous as jewelry or a new car, but they could prove to be vital during a disaster.

FLOODING (cont’d from front page)

Heavy flooding was reported on U.S. Highway 17 at I-526. Some residents in Shadowmoss said numerous homes around the neighborhood golf course’s 15th fairway had water in their kitchens and garages. On James Island, some residents broke out their kayaks for transportation.

The Weather Service received reports of flooding in Charleston that made sections of Morrison, East Bay, Bee and Calhoun streets as well as parts of Ashley and Rutledge avenues and other streets impassable.

Tony Bartelme contributed to this report.
Reach Prentiss Findlay at pfindlay@postandcourier.com.



Photo by Geoff Marshall/TheDigital

Record-setting rain flooded streets and stalled cars on Ashley Avenue in Charleston, October 24-26, 2008.



Ordinance Review



Maria Cox, Associate Engineer

Lee County's updated flood insurance studies and DFIRMs became effective Nov. 19, 2008. Thank you to Bishopville officials for their efforts in adopting a new Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. The unincorporated areas of Lee County, and the Town of Lynchburg, were unable to meet compliance standards before the new map effective date, and consequently, were suspended from the National Flood Insurance Program. We will continue to work with Lee County and Lynchburg officials to get these communities reinstated in the program.

To make it easier for local officials to draft new ordinances, SCDNR has created a user-friendly, computer-based tool, the *SC Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance Tool*, downloadable at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/water/flood/mgrsinfo.html>. The tool is designed to guide the community official through a series of questions about the community, flood zones on the maps, desired structural standards, and development activities tailored to address specific needs of the community. The data is able to be generated and saved during multiple work sessions, and can be stored as a *.pdf file on a computer hard drive, server, or disk. The tool also provides information about the Community Rating System (CRS) score the ordinance would qualify for, hence, savings. The tool also produces a checklist that is *required to be sent to our office, along with the ordinance* to expedite review and approval. The goal of this tool is to have the community be more involved in the development of their Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, thus reducing confusion while drafting and adopting, and during enforcement. For questions regarding this tool please contact Maria Cox at coxm@dnr.sc.gov or 803-734-9493.

Map Modernization



Kris Gonzalez, Outreach Coordinator

Accurate elevation data is one of the most important keys to producing good maps. Many counties and municipalities are starting to collect digital elevation data, and that information will be a tremendous benefit for the mapping program. The elevation data can be used to extract accurate stream valley cross sections for the hydrologic and hydraulic models and will allow for more accurate mapping of the floodplain determined from the modeling calculations. FEMA requires that elevation data must be at least 4-foot contours, with 2-foot contours or better preferred. Digital elevation data can be a key component in FEMA's ranking of counties for new floodplain maps. If you have digital elevation data or are planning to collect it within the next year, please let us know as soon as possible. Contact Kris Gonzalez at gonzalezk@dnr.sc.gov or at 803-734-1410.

The 90-day appeal period for Oconee County ended on December 3, 2008. No appeals were received. One protest was received at the PDCC meeting and has been incorporated into the new flood maps. The Letter of Final Determination is expected to be mailed to communities in March 2009, with an anticipated map effective date in September 2009.

Karen's Korner



Karen Jones, Administrative Assistant

As we begin the New Year, it is a time of hope and possibility as newly elected officials take office again or for the first time. The November elections brought new faces to local governments and a change in leadership and priorities. The New Year marks an opportunity to advocate for flood prevention and we hope you will join us again in 2009 to make flood mitigation a priority in SC communities. This year we call on you to let us know of any changes in your floodplain management program and to ensure your contact information is up-to-date. We especially need email addresses for new CEOs and floodplain managers. You may update your information at <http://dnr.sc.gov/water/flood/FloodplainChangeForm.html>. With your help we can protect our citizens and their property.

As Beverly Sills once said, "There are no shortcuts to any place worth going," so make the most of the trip!



Upcoming Training Events

Flood Issues Seminar Jan. 29 in N. Charleston

The Charleston County Area, SC Project Impact initiative is sponsoring a seminar on "Flood Issues" on January 29, 2009 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Charleston County Emergency Operations Center, 4045 Bridge View Dr., North Charleston, SC. A host of speakers from Charleston-area local governments and the South Carolina Flood Mitigation Program will present on important issues regarding constructing buildings in the flood hazard areas, new interpretations of floodplain management/insurance rating requirements for elevation certificates and buildings, on Charleston County's flood maps (currently under modernization), and on other related topics. A panel of local officials will be on hand to present on their unique requirements in their local flood ordinances and answer questions regarding their floodplain management programs. This seminar is eligible for registration fee payment of \$25 for S.C. registered code enforcement officers who receive authorization to attend from the S.C. Building Codes Council. Fax registration forms to Jennie Meade at 843-202-6954 to request this fee payment authorization only if you are an eligible S.C. registered code enforcement officer. Registration forms with the \$25 fee payment need to be submitted by January, 15, 2009. The seminar is creditable for 4 professional development hours of continuing education for South Carolina registered code enforcement officers, registered land surveyors, professional engineers, and registered architects. The seminar is also creditable for 4 core continuing education credits for Association of State Floodplain Managers Certified Floodplain Managers. For mor information, contact Joni Rennhack at jrennhack@charlestoncounty.org or 843-202-6490.

SCAHM proctors CFM Exam March 10 in N. Myrtle Beach

The South Carolina Association for Hazard Mitigation will proctor the Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) exam from 3 to 6 p.m., March 10, at its 2009 Conference in North Myrtle. The annual conference will take place March 10-13, 2009, at the Ocean Drive Beach & Golf Resort. Registration forms can be downloaded at <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/water/flood/documents/2009SCAHMConferenceRegistration.pdf>, and must be returned by **February 27, 2009**. To take the exam, you must register through ASFPM by **February 25, 2009**. The CFM exam application can be downloaded from the ASFPM website at <http://www.floods.org/pdf/certapp.pdf>. A prep guide for the exam is available at <http://www.floods.org/Certification/certguid.asp>. Conference attendees are eligible for 12 continuing education credits toward their CFM status. For more information, contact Chris Stone at 803-785-8121 or cstone@lex-co.com; or Shawn Putnam at 803-432-2421 or putnam@camdensc.org.

ASFPM 33rd Conference June 7-12 in Orlando, Fl.

The Association of State Floodplain Managers will host the ASFPM 33rd Annual Conference the week of June 7-12, 2009, in Orlando, FL. The conference theme is "Green Works to Reduce Flood Losses". Throughout the week, nearly 200 of the industry's experts will conduct plenary and concurrent sessions and share state-of-the-art techniques, programs, and resources to accomplish flood mitigation, watershed management, and other community goals. A three-day comprehensive exposition features the materials, equipment, accessories, and services vital to get the job done. Supplementary technical field tours and training workshops provide in-depth training and numerous networking activities offer additional opportunities to learn from each other. Participation in the full conference earns 12 Continuing Education Credits (CECs) for Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs). Workshops are assigned the applicable number of CECs in their respective descriptions in the Conference Brochure. More information can be found at the ASFPM website <http://www.floods.org/Conferences,%20Calendar/Orlando.asp#reg>.





FEMA *News Flash*

Risk Map

Building upon the successes of Map Modernization, FEMA is transitioning into Phase II, called the Mapping, Assessment, and Planning Strategy (Risk MAP) in Fiscal Year 2009. The Risk MAP concept is an improved, integrated approach where flood hazards are identified and then woven into watershed-based risk assessments and State and local hazard mitigation planning efforts. The Risk MAP concept helps move the partnership with local communities beyond simply mapping the flood hazard. It describes how to evolve existing activities in innovative ways to encourage local mitigation actions that reduce risk to life and property. SCDNR Flood Mitigation Staff will continue assisting FEMA and South Carolina communities in achieving the objectives of Map Modernization and to continue its leadership role as it transitions into Risk MAP.

Paper to Digital

Beginning on or after October 1, 2009, FEMA will provide a single paper flood map and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) to each mapped community. FEMA will convert all other distribution of maps and FIS reports for digital delivery. FEMA will continue to provide free digital map products and data to Federal, State, Tribal, and local NFIP stakeholders. FEMA announced this change in the Federal Register (PDF, 43KB), Vol. 23, No. 76, issued on October 23, 2008. Read more about the digital transition. FEMA will also discontinue mailing hard copies of documents enclosed with Letters of Final Determination (LFDs) beginning January 1, 2009. An LFD is a letter mailed to community officials to inform them that a new or updated FIRM will become effective in 6 months. Additionally, an LFD finalizes the Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) for the community. Upon receiving an LFD, a participating community must establish compliant floodplain management ordinances by the effective date of the new FIRM to remain in the NFIP. Communities still will receive a hard copy of the LFD, but instead of receiving enclosures with the letter, FEMA will now make them available on FEMA's Web site at www.floodmaps.fema.gov/dfd. The five enclosures to the LFD that will no longer be included with the letter include:

- Answers to Questions about the NFIP;
- Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations;
- "Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Effect that Revised Flood Hazards Have on Existing Structures;"
- "Use of Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Data as Available Data;" and
- The Elevation Certificates necessary to ensure compliance with community floodplain ordinances.

Communities will still be able to request hard copies of enclosures through the FEMA Map Assistance Center at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627). Additionally, a fact sheet describing the transition to digital LFD enclosures is available at www.floodmaps.fema.gov/dfd. For questions, please contact Lora Eskandary at FEMA headquarters at 202-646-2717 or lora.eskandary@dhs.gov.

New Map Service

FEMA replaced the "flood" Web Map Service (WMS) Dec. 1, 2008 with the National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) WMS. The "NFHL" WMS uses the same symbols as maps from other FEMA services, but displays more features and is more legible when overlaid on aerial photographs. The NFHL WMS service displays flood hazard areas in shades of RED. Geographic Information System (GIS) or computer mapping software users should change their software to employ "NFHL" WMS. Users of the "FEMA NFHL" Google Earth utility (kmz) file should upgrade to the new version of the "FEMA NFHL" kmz file. This change should take about 10 minutes to make. Information about the "NFHL" WMS and "FEMA NFHL" Google Earth utility (kmz) file is available in the NFHL section of the FEMA Map Service Center Web site at <http://msc.fema.gov>. Please refer questions about this change to MIPhelp@mapmodteam.com and enter the phrase "flood WMS" in the subject of the message.

