

# Guidelines and Specifications for FHM Partners



## **WHAT GUIDANCE HAS FEMA ISSUED FOR FLOOD HAZARD ASSESSMENT AND MAPPING?**

- In February 2002, FEMA issued Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners.
- The Guidelines define technical requirements, coordination and documentation activities, and product specifications for flood maps and related products.
- The Guidelines are web-based and incorporate previous FEMA guidelines and specifications documents.
- The Guidelines also include new products and processes defined as part of the FEMA Map Modernization Program.

## **WHAT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE TO THE GUIDELINES?**

### **Data Capture Standards**

As of April 2004, FEMA has described the minimum requirements for submission of engineering data. These Data Capture Standards define the content and format of the engineering data that results from the flood insurance study process and support the building of the Enhanced DFIRM Database. The Data Capture Standards will become effective for all studies that are initiated after July 15, 2004.

### **Enhanced DFIRM Database**

The specifications for the Enhanced Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM)

Database augment the Standard DFIRM Database specifications identified in the February 2002 Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners. The Enhanced DFIRM Database captures additional information used to determine the flood hazard information depicted on FIRMs.

The Standard DFIRM Database represents the current effective flood hazard information published by FEMA.

- The database corresponds primarily to the information shown on the FIRM
- Enables the user to determine the flood risk zone, floodway status, base flood elevation, community and coastal barrier resource system status for a location.

The Enhanced DFIRM Database is designed to store information about the analyses used to determine current effective flood hazard information and supplemental results of those analyses.

The Enhanced Database contains all the elements of the Standard DFIRM Database, plus:

- The database stores GIS data for drainage basins, hydrologic networks, centerlines for hydraulic models and other supporting information
- The engineering models are linked directly to these geographic features
- Data for flood frequencies in addition to the base flood (if included in hydrologic and hydraulic analyses)

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- The database also supports storing additional GIS layers that support the analyses such as ground elevation, soils, land use, etc.

The contents of the Enhanced DFIRM database are identified in Appendix L of the Guidelines and Specifications for Flood Hazard Mapping Partners dated April 2003.

## **HOW ARE THE GUIDELINES USED?**

- The Guidelines will be used by FEMA Regional Office and Headquarters staff and the staff of other “Flood Hazard Mapping Partners” involved in producing and maintaining products in support of the National Flood Insurance Program.
- These Mapping Partners include communities, regional agencies, and State agencies, including participants in the Cooperating Technical Partners Program; contractors to FEMA and other Mapping Partners; other Federal agencies; and community residents and property owners.

## **HOW ARE THE GUIDELINES ORGANIZED?**

The Guidelines are organized into three volumes and 13 appendices:

- Volume 1 provides detailed guidance for the activities involved in the completion of Flood Mapping Projects, including: (1) mapping needs assessment; (2) project scoping; (3) topographic and flood hazard data development; (4) map and report

production; and (5) Preliminary/post-Preliminary processing.

- Volume 2 provides detailed guidance for conditional and final revisions and amendments to flood maps initiated by community officials, property owners, and other Mapping Partners, including Letters of Map Revision, Letters of Map Revision Based on Fill, and Letters of Map Amendment.
- Volume 3 provides detailed guidance for five general categories of program support activities performed for FEMA by various Mapping Partners.
- Appendices A through M provide additional guidance for processes and products associated with flood maps, including aerial mapping and surveying; vertical datum conversions; analyses and mapping of riverine, coastal, shallow, ice-jam, and alluvial fan flooding; evaluation and mapping of flood protection systems; and digital flood map production.

## **WHERE CAN THE GUIDELINES BE OBTAINED?**

- Interested parties may download the Guidelines from the FEMA Web site at [www.fema.gov/fhm/gs\\_main.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/fhm/gs_main.shtm).
- A CD-ROM version of the Guidelines may be ordered from the FEMA Map Service Center, toll free, at 1-800-358-9616, or via the Internet at <http://store.msc.fema.gov>.