

---

# WATERLINES

News affecting the management and use of Indiana's water resources

---

DIVISION OF WATER  
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
WINTER 2014

---

## INDIANA, FLOOD INSURANCE CHANGES, AND THE COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

Many changes in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have been made as a result of the portions of the Biggert Waters Reform Act of 2012 (BW12) that were implemented over the past year.

The impacts of full-risk rating were particularly noteworthy, prompting questions of affordability and unintended consequences. Recently proposed legislation indicates that more changes are on the way. Those changes may delay but will not necessarily eliminate the drive toward full risk rating for pre-FIRM structures and the effort to make the program financially sound.

The phase-out of subsidized flood insurance and the need to increase understanding of flood risk may be the perfect catalyst for action. While mitigation activities such as elevation and buy-outs affect a few individuals at a time, the Community Rating System (CRS) potentially impacts many. Communities should take this opportunity to increase understanding of the NFIP's Community Rating System and consider participation. Among other benefits, it is one way to reduce flood insurance premiums.

Indiana currently has 17 communities participating

in CRS: Decatur, Allen County, Fort Wayne, Bartholomew County, Columbus, Hamilton County, Noblesville, Hancock County, Kokomo, Kosciusko County, Milford, North Webster, Syracuse, Anderson, Indianapolis, Evansville, and Vanderburgh County.

### Community Rating System

The CRS is a voluntary program for communities participating in the NFIP. The goals of the CRS are to reduce flood damages to insurable property, strengthen and support the insurance aspects of the NFIP, and encourage a comprehensive approach to floodplain management. The CRS has been developed to provide flood insurance premium discount incentives for communities that implement floodplain management practices and exceed the minimum requirements of the NFIP.

#### Also in this issue

<b>Operation Stay Afloat 2014</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Elevation Elation</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Congratulations</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Certified Floodplain Manager</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Conference Corner</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>FAQ</b> .....	<b>7</b>

The rating process for flood insurance policies in CRS communities is the same for non-CRS communities, except that the CRS discount is automatically applied to the premium subtotal [premium and Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) premium] by an insurance company.

### CRS Community Classifications and Discounts Can Vary

CRS-participating communities are assigned a CRS class rating from CRS Class 1 to CRS Class 10. A Class 1 community requires the most credit points and affords the greatest premium discounts for properties located within its jurisdiction. A CRS Class 10 identifies a community that has never participated in the CRS, or has participated in the CRS in the past but no longer participates. Indiana CRS communities currently range from Class 9 to Class 7.

Communities advance in CRS classes by improving their floodplain management programs and making changes to help eliminate or reduce exposure to floods. The types of activities recognized through the CRS include:

- better public information about flood risk and the NFIP;

- maintaining high quality and up-to-date mapping and building-code regulations;
- working to improve flood-damage reduction practices; and
- implementing sound community flood preparedness activities.

Once a community applies to the appropriate Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional Office for the CRS program and its implementation is verified, it receives a rating classification based upon the credit points earned.

A CRS rating classification determines the flood insurance premium discount for policyholders of insured property within the CRS-participating community. Premium discounts range from 5 percent for a CRS Class 9 community to a maximum of 45 percent for a CRS Class 1 community. Table 1 shows premium discounts for CRS Classes 1–10 within different flood zones.

Insurance agents need to know what their community rating is to understand whether they can offer their clients a lower flood insurance premium through the CRS. A community’s CRS class and associated premium discounts are based on its assigned community number. Often, the agent’s insurance carrier includes CRS rating

**TABLE 1. CRS PREMIUM DISCOUNTS**

CLASS	DISCOUNT	CLASS	DISCOUNT
1	45%	6	20%
2	40%	7	15%
3	35%	8	10%
4	30%	9	5%
5	25%	10	—

SFHA (Zones A, AE, A1-A30, V, V1-V30, AO, and AH): Discount varies depending on class.

SFHA (Zones A99, AR, AR/A, AR/AE, AR/A1-A30, and AR/AO): 10% discount for Classes 1-6; 5% discount for Classes 7-9\*

Non-SFHA (Zones B, C, X, D): 10% discount for Classes 1-6; 5% discount for Classes 7-9.

\* In determining CRS Premium Discounts, all AR and A99 Zones are treated as non-SFHAs.

information within the rating tools they provide to their agents.

### **Some Policies are Ineligible for CRS Discount in CRS Community**

Remember, certain NFIP policies may not be eligible for the extra discount afforded to them by living in a CRS community. Preferred Risk Policies (PRPs) are not eligible for CRS discounts because these policies already receive a favorable flood insurance rate when compared to their flood risk. Policies provided under the Mortgage Portfolio Protection Program (MPPP) by a lender are also ineligible for a CRS discount.

Also ineligible for CRS discounts are certain post-FIRM structures built out of compliance with a community's floodplain management ordinance and located in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), where the lowest floor elevation used for rating is 1 foot or more below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE). The two exceptions to this ineligible rule are:

- post-FIRM V-Zone buildings with unfinished breakaway wall enclosures and machinery or equipment at or above the BFE; *and*
- sub-grade crawlspaces with certification from a community official.

CRS-ineligible properties are discussed further in the NFIP Flood Insurance Manual.

### **Policy Rating in a CRS Community and NFIP Participation**

As noted, the procedures used for rating policies in CRS communities is the same as it is in non-CRS communities, except the discount is applied to the premium subtotal (premium and ICC premium). The CRS discount should not be applied to the probation surcharge (if applicable) or federal policy fee.

There is no flood insurance coverage available in a community that does not participate in the NFIP. If you are uncertain whether your com-

munity participates in the NFIP, call your insurance agent, consult a local community official, or check the NFIP Community Status Book link, which is provided at the end of this article. Financial lenders are not required by their regulators to ensure that collateral is protected by flood insurance in communities that do not participate in the NFIP. Keep in mind that some communities may be in the emergency phase of the NFIP and are therefore ineligible.

The flood zone on an insurance application must be documented to assist in rating the flood risk for any policy sold. Common sources of evidence of the flood zone are a Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), an Elevation Certificate, or a Standard Flood Hazard Determination Form. Many insurers provide their agents with access to flood zone determination services.

### **Consider CRS**

Each community must consider their resources, time and staff to the advantages of CRS. Should your community want more community specific information, contact the CRS specialist for this area, Christina Groves, at [cgroves@iso.com](mailto:cgroves@iso.com) or (270) 312-7274. ☞

*Excerpts from e-Watermark 8/23/2013*

### **OPERATION STAY AFLOAT 2014**

Save the date of March 13, which is when the DNR Division of Water and the Indiana Department of Homeland Security will co-host the 6<sup>th</sup> biennial Operation Stay Afloat Conference in the Conference Center at the Indiana Government Center South Building, 402 W. Washington Street, Indianapolis. This is a one-day conference you won't want to miss. For more information, check [IN.gov/dnr/water](http://IN.gov/dnr/water), or contact Anita Nance at [anance@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:anance@dnr.IN.gov). ☞

## ELEVATION IS CAUSE FOR RELIEF WHEN DAMAGE IS AVOIDED

*When it's our state, a town we've driven through, or the town we're from stories come to life and we become more in tune with the predicament. We can relate. That's why local success stories are so important. Here is one that Hoosiers can relate to. Even FEMA featured it on its website. It relays the importance of mitigation through elevation.*



*Robin Lane's elevated residence in Spencer, Indiana.  
(Photo courtesy of FEMA)*

When Robin Lane moved to Spencer in 2003, she had no idea that five years later she would be rescued by boat during a flood.

Lane's residence was located 300 feet from the West Fork of the White River, which had flooded three times since 1990. On Jan. 7, 2005, her manufactured home was destroyed by 4 feet of floodwater.

Lane had lived in the area for almost two years. She chose to remain and rebuild in the same location. She was eligible for up to \$30,000 of Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) coverage through her policy with FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). In order to meet the Town of Spencer's floodplain ordinances, the house had to be raised at least 2 feet above the base flood elevation (BFE).

She found plans for a coastal-style house, hired an architect to draft the plans, and an engineer to design the reinforced-cement pillars that would hold the 2,000-square-foot house a total of 8 feet above the ground. This plan would not only keep her safe from flooding but also allow her to plant some trees, a garden, and set aside an area with lawn furniture, which could be quickly moved upstairs if needed. According to ICC regulations, the open area underneath the house has to remain unencumbered to allow floodwater to pass safely through.

Lane went to sleep on the night of June 5, 2008, and woke in the early hours. Her house was surrounded by water. The river had risen 2.8 feet during the night and overflowed the banks.

At 8:25 p.m. on June 4, the river was at flood level (14 feet). It rose to 16.8 feet by 7 a.m. the next day, according to wastewater technician and long-time Spencer resident Shelley Edwards. He is also a Cooperating Weather Observer (CWO) for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and submits his findings to NOAA every day at 7 a.m. He said rainfall for May had been unusual: "Three and a half to 4 inches is normal. In May, we had 6 and a half."

The water continued to rise to the NOAA category Major Flood Stage of 24 feet and finally crested at 26.93 feet on June 8, coming close to breaking a record set in 1913 of 28.50 feet.

"My car was completely submerged," Lane said.

At first, as Lane watched her neighbors being evacuated from their homes, she felt that she and her dog could just wait until the water receded because they were safely out of danger.

She was repeatedly asked by the fire and police departments' volunteers to evacuate and always answered, "No, I'm okay."

By the fourth day, she changed her mind.

"The mosquitoes were getting really bad and (the dog) really needed to run."

When the next offer to evacuate came, her answer was: "When you get done at the next house, come get me in the boat."

Though some of her neighbors have referred to her residence as "the birdhouse" (because it's so high in the air), Robin has the satisfaction of having

avoided another flood disaster because her home is well above the water mark. ☹

*Editor's note: Many mitigate their homes after experiencing substantial damage caused by a flood due to the minimum requirements of the NFIP, which have been adopted into the local floodplain regulations; but, not all property owners experience another flood so timely as to solidify the wisdom of that requirement. Lane's experience underscores that her elevation project was truly worthwhile. With the recent reforms to the NFIP, the rewards of being elevated 2 feet above the BFE are saving her from costly flood insurance premiums as well.*

FEMA.gov

## NEW CFMS



Indiana currently has 95 Certified Floodplain Managers (CFMs). The most recent additions to this list are Scott Dompke of Bloomington (GRW, Inc.), Perry Rodger Keller of Franklin (Town of Shelbyville), Joseph Mapes of Indianapolis (DNR Division of Water) and Andrew Miller of Carmel (Weihe Engineers). Each passed the CFM exam offered at the Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (INAFSM) conference on Sept. 12, 2013. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

The Certified Floodplain Manager program is a

national certification authorized by the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM). This certification recognizes the knowledge that enables the individual to initially pass the exam, and requires continuing education and professional development.

Achieving the CFM certification demonstrates awareness not only of the National Flood Insurance Program, but also of comprehensive floodplain management.

The exam is offered each fall at the INAFSM conference. It is also typically offered in the spring by the DNR Division of Water. For more information on the CFM program, visit the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) at **floods.org**. ☹

### **Are you ready to become a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM)? Here's your opportunity.**

**CFM Refresher Course and Exam**  
**March 27, 2014**  
**Refresher Course 8:30 – 11:45 am**  
**Exam 1:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Indiana Government Center South**  
**Conference Room 14**  
**402 West Washington Street**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46204**

To take the exam, you must apply through the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM) website, **floods.org**. Application must be made at least 2 weeks in advance. Anyone is welcome to participate in the refresher course. For additional information, contact Anita Nance, **anance@dnr.in.gov**. ☹

# CONFERENCE CORNER

## INAFSM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2013 Conference of the Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management (INAFSM) was held at Potawatomi Inn in Pokagon State Park, Sept. 11-13. The conference featured floodplain, MS4 and stormwater-based sessions.

Awards presented at the conference included the Excellence in Stormwater Management, which was awarded both to Randy Braun (Indiana Department of Environmental Management) and

Oak Park Conservancy District; Outstanding Stormwater Project Award, which was awarded to the City of Jeffersonville for its Stormwater Master Plan (Lead Consultant - Christopher Burke Engineering); Excellence in Floodplain Management Award, which was awarded to David Nance (DNR) and the City of Columbus for their Flood Risk Management Plan (Lead Consultant: Christopher B. Burke Engineering); Outstanding Floodplain Project Award was awarded to the City of Angola for the John Leach Drain Wetland Restoration (Lead Consultant – Rowland Associated, Inc.); the Excellent Strides in Floodplain Management Award was presented to the City of Lake Station; and, the Chairman’s Award for Outstanding Service in Support of INAFSM was awarded to Matt Rummel, webmaster/technical advisor to INAFSM. The chair also recognized Unique Dahl, board administrative assistant, for outstanding service to the INAFSM Board and membership. ☞



2013 INAFSM Award Recipients and Presenters: (L to R) Matt Rummel; Unique Dahl; Steve Fuchs (Awards Chair); Randy Braun; Mike Simiakos and Mayor Keith Soderquist (Lake Station); Jay Thompson and Bryan Wallace (Oak Park Conservancy District); Thomas Weintraut (City of Columbus); Eric Henion (City of Angola); Sheila McKinley (Christopher B. Burke Engineering); David Nance; and, Daryl Helfert (INAFSM Chair).  
(Photo by Suzie Delay)

## Frequently Asked Questions



**Q: How can I find out what communities participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)?**

A: You can find a list of communities that participate in the NFIP (counties, cities, towns or tribes) for any state or territory of the United States on the NFIP Community Status Book page, [fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program/national-flood-insurance-program-community-status-book](https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program/national-flood-insurance-program-community-status-book). The Community Status Book provides the date of program entry, whether a community has been suspended or voluntarily withdrawn from the NFIP, and other detailed information.

**Q: A residence in the floodway was recently damaged by straight-line winds. Can it be repaired or replaced?**

A: First, the local Floodplain Administrator must determine if other more restrictive local regulations, such as zoning, allow repair or replacement of the residence. If so, the next step is to determine whether the residence was “substantially damaged.” Unless the community has adopted more restrictive standards, substantially damaged means the cost to restore the residence to its pre-damaged condition is more than 50 percent of the fair market value of the residence (excluding land) before the damage occurred. The cost must include materials and labor.

If the residence is *not substantially damaged*, the residence can be repaired without a DNR permit as allowed by statute (IC 14-28-1-26). However, local permits are still required, and the local floodplain administrator is expected to maintain documentation showing that the damage sustained was non-substantial. Indiana’s Flood Control Act will allow at least one addition/improvement/repair up to 50 percent. The DNR depends upon the local floodplain administrator to obtain and maintain the documentation.

Should the local floodplain administrator determine that the residence *has been substantially damaged*, the residence may be reconstructed—either by bringing the existing residence into compliance or by replacing the residence with a new structure that is fully compliant. Reconstruction requires prior written approval from DNR, either in the form of a letter or Approval for Construction in a Floodway.

Compliance means that the top of the lowest floor of the reconstructed residence must be located at or above the flood protection grade (FPG), which is 2 feet above the base flood elevation; any materials used below the FPG must be flood resistant; and the structure must be anchored to prevent flotation, collapse or lateral movement. Elevated structures with fully enclosed areas below the FPG cannot have finished living space below the FPG, and the enclosure must be designed to allow for the entry and exit of floodwaters to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls. This means flood vents must be installed if an elevated home has an enclosure below the lowest floor. Doors and windows do not count as flood vents. The flood vents must be compliant. See your local floodplain ordinance or FEMA Technical Bulletin 1 for details regarding the criteria for compliant flood vents. Note that use of enclosures is limited to storage, building access and parking of vehicles.

If reconstructed without extending beyond the original dimensions of the original residence, the applicant must submit the proposed plans to DNR for review, and no fee is charged. If the plan is compliant, the DNR will issue a letter and the local permit process can proceed. If reconstruction plans are to increase the size of the new structure beyond the original dimensions of the original residence, or fill is proposed to meet the elevation requirement, the formal permit process is necessary. The applicant must submit an application for Construction in the Floodway, compliant plans and appropriate fees; meet public notice requirements; and wait for approval for before proceeding with the local permit process. ☞

*(Note: Different regulations apply to residences in the floodway of the Ohio River.)*

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF WATER  
402 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, ROOM W264  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204-2641

┌

┐

└

┘

**The work that provides the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a cooperative agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements, and interpretations contained in the publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal government.**

## **THANK YOU**

Thank you to those contributing to this issue of *Waterlines*: Greg Main, Debbie Smith, Marty Benson, Bill Marsh, and Ed Reynolds.

Editor – Anita Nance

*Waterlines* is published biannually as a public service by the Division of Water, Indiana Department of Natural Resources. The cooperation and assistance of the National Weather Service is gratefully acknowledged.

*Waterlines* is available free of charge to interested parties upon request. Call or write:

Division of Water  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
402 West Washington Street, Room W264  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2641  
Phone: (317)232-4160  
Toll free 1-877-WATER55

***Waterlines* is also available on the Web at  
[www.IN.gov/dnr/water](http://www.IN.gov/dnr/water)**