



NFIP/CRS UPDATE

May 2013

Michael Sutfin receives CRS Award for Excellence

The 2013 CRS Award for Excellence was presented to Michael Sutfin, CFM, Building Official and Floodplain Manager for the City of Ottawa, Illinois, at the National Flood Conference in May.

Sutfin’s years with Ottawa so far have yielded a CRS Class 5, but the community is poised to achieve Class 2 before long. Aggressive pursuit of City Council “buy in” characterized Sutfin’s efforts, and the reward was community support for numerous floodplain management measures that have enhanced safety, property protection, insurance coverage, and preparedness. Just a few of Sutfin’s notable efforts have included tireless work to

- Incorporate higher floodplain management regulatory standards into the City’s ordinance, including freeboard and compensatory storage;
- Increase flood risk awareness among local insurance agents and real estate agents, with workshops and training;
- Guide private nonprofit organizations in purchasing flood insurance;
- Remedy repetitive flood losses with buyout and other mitigation measures;
- Enhance public awareness of the floodplain through maps, website information, interviews with the media, and other techniques; and
- Develop a flood warning and response plan for use by City workers, including City notification to specific at-risk businesses.



Michael Sutfin, CFM, of Ottawa, Illinois, displays his 2013 CRS Award for Excellence, flanked by David L. Miller, Associate Administrator, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration (at left) and Edward L. Connor, Deputy Associate Administrator for Federal Insurance, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration.

The CRS Award for Excellence recognizes an individual who has demonstrated outstanding accomplishments in promoting flood insurance and advancing floodplain management and mitigation, in CRS communities. Congratulations to Mike Sutfin on this achievement. ≡ ≡ ≡

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Making the Transition to the 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*

The 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual* (available at www.CRSresources.org) became effective in April 2013. From now on, all community verification visits will be based on the 2013 *Manual*.

However, until a community has its next verification visit from ISO/CRS Specialist, all annual recertifications will be based on the 2007 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*. A community that is not being visited by ISO this year will receive recertification forms (AW-214) from the 2007 *Coordinator's Manual*, and its recertification items will be based on its last verification visit.

Communities will not receive the new CRS Program Data Table (Section 213, Figure 210-2 of the 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*) or be required to submit copies of all Elevation Certificates (a 2013 requirement, as noted in the last *NFIP/CRS Update*) until their next verification visit from an ISO/CRS Specialist.

Here are some examples of how the transition will work.

- **A community not visited in 2013 but scheduled for a verification visit in 2014 or beyond**

These communities will receive an AW-214 from their ISO/CRS Specialist in August and recertification requirements will be based on the last verification visit and the 2007 *Coordinator's Manual*. These recertifications are due October 1. A community may want to begin organizing Elevation Certificates now, but it will not need to submit them until the next verification visit. The next verification visit will be based on the 2013 *Coordinator's Manual*. At the next verification visit, the ISO/CRS Specialist will assist the community with understanding what is required for the Program Data Table.

- **A community that had a verification visit based on the 2007 *Coordinator's Manual* between January 1 and April 22, 2013**

These communities WILL NOT receive an AW-214 in 2013 since they just had a verification visit. In August 2014, and annually until its next visit from its ISO/CRS Specialist, the community will receive an AW-214 in August and recertification requirements will be based on the last verification visit and the 2007 *Coordinator's Manual*. A community may want to begin organizing Elevation Certificates now, but it will not need to submit them until the next verification visit. The next verification visit will be based on the 2013 *Coordinator's Manual*. At the next verification visit, the ISO/CRS Specialist will help the community with understanding what is required for the Program Data Table

- **A community scheduled for a verification visit between April 22, 2013 and the end of 2013**

These communities' verifications will be based on the 2013 *Coordinator's Manual*. Recertification for 2013 will not be required. The community will need to provide all Elevation Certificates since the previous verification visit, if not two months before. The ISO/CRS Specialist will help the community understand what is required for the Program Data Table.

Direct questions about the 2013 *Coordinator's Manual* to your ISO/CRS Specialist. Their names and contact information are posted at www.CRSresources.org/100. ≡ ≡ ≡

New Guidance on Certificates— Elevation, Floodproofing, V-Zone

As in the past, to participate in the CRS a “community must maintain completed FEMA Elevation Certificates showing the ‘finished construction’ elevations for all buildings constructed or substantially improved in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)” after the date of its application to the CRS. There are a few new items and clarifications in the 2013 *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*.

- The 2012 Elevation Certificate (which expires in 2015) must be used for all new construction and substantial improvements surveyed after August 1, 2013.
- The official date of a community’s application to the CRS is the date of the verification visit when the ISO/CRS Specialist collects the documentation to support the application. The credit for element EC under Activity 310 is for keeping all required certificates from that day forward. Since there are not likely to be any post-CRS certificates available on that date, a new community can receive full credit for EC without providing any certificates at the first visit. Certificates are reviewed at each subsequent recertification, so if there are problems with them, the community will be advised.
- The community must collect and maintain Floodproofing Certificates (FEMA Form 086-0-34) on all newly floodproofed buildings and floodproofed substantial improvements in the SFHA. A separate Elevation Certificate is not needed for the floodproofed building.
- In V Zones, all new Elevation Certificates must be accompanied by a V-Zone design certification. There is no official FEMA form, but the CRS recommends the example that appears on page 310-4 of the 2013 *CRS Coordinator’s Manual* (www.CRSresources.org/300).

The community must review all the certificates that it collects to be sure that they are filled out completely and correctly. Pages 310-7 and 310-8 of the *Coordinator’s Manual* include checklists for the 2006, 2009, and 2012 Elevation Certificates. There will be checklists for the Floodproofing Certificate and the V-Zone design certificates and for earlier versions of the Elevation Certificate posted on www.CRSresources.org/300.

Here are some clarifications on checking for errors.

- If Section A8 or A9 “Engineered flood openings?” has “yes” checked, then a copy of the engineering certificate or the Evaluation Report issued by the International Code Council Evaluation Service must be attached. Because this was not required in the Elevation Certificate instructions or the 2007 *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*, communities are not required to have the certification at their first cycle visit under the 2013 *CRS Coordinator’s Manual*. After that, if the certification is not attached, it will be counted as an error.
- Section C3.e) “Elevation of machinery and equipment,” needs to be completed with an elevation, even in cases in which the equipment is located on the roof. The comments section should describe the machinery or equipment type and its general location. Remember that “machinery and equipment” includes “furnaces, hot water heaters, heat pumps, air conditioners, and elevators and their associated equipment.”
- Scanned, photocopied, and digital Elevation Certificates are acceptable. There does not have to be a seal on the version submitted as long as it can be determined that the Elevation Certificate was completed by a design professional. ≡≡≡

DEBBIE'S DISH *on CRS Users Groups*

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Users Groups Liaison

More Ingredients for CRS Success

CRS communities are always looking for bigger and better ways to reach their citizens, aka the people who are the most affected by the CRS class the communities work so hard to achieve. Our CRS Users Groups are thinking outside the box of the usual quarterly or monthly meetings that groups tend to fall back on, and instead are developing additional methods to reach their members. Here are some samples of how they go above and beyond for their memberships.

WEBSITE—Coastal Hazards Outreach Strategy Team (C-HOST)

Based in Mississippi, C-HOST was one of the first CRS Users Groups. C-HOST started out as an Activity 330 project for OPS credit (outreach projects pursuant to a public information program strategy, under the 2007 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*) that involved members of the public. Being along the coast, C-HOST took advantage of the StormSmart website to create its own website, <http://chost.stormsmart.org>. One look at the site will show you C-HOST's commitment to bringing the most comprehensive information to its group. One particularly interesting page includes videos featuring Rick Stickler, Floodplain Manager of Biloxi, Mississippi. These less-than-15-second clips are useful visual reminders about flood insurance and other issues—another way C-HOST works to educate and protect citizens.

NEWSLETTER—Missouri/Kansas CRS Users Group (MOKAN)

This two-state group had a lot of great ideas from the very beginning. One is the publication of a users' group newsletter. The February 2013 issue included a list of communities and contact information for specific CRS activities. Identifying certain communities in this way lets the whole group know whom to call for specific experience in putting something together for that activity. The newsletter also spotlighted training opportunities and included articles on specific CRS activities such as open space and higher regulatory standards, how to apply to the CRS, the new FEMA Elevation Certificates and Floodproofing Certificates, ISO/CRS Specialist updates, and success stories.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE—Flood Loss Outreach & Awareness Task Force (FLOAT)

This Lake Pontchartrain-area group boasts a few impressive statistics. Its communities account for 42% of Louisiana's NFIP policies and pay 44% of the NFIP premiums. FLOAT members want the group to act as a regional committee for the communities' Program for Public Information under CRS Activity 330. The group developed multi-jurisdictional committee worksheets to be filled out with names to fit the roles required under the PPI, such as one person from a public information office and a local insurance agent. FLOAT's challenge will be to keep the group from getting too big, but the members are excited to participate in a regional committee that will benefit all of the involved communities.

These are just a few ways CRS Users Groups are exploring to keep their members up to date and engaged. Future articles will spotlight how other users groups are making the most of their resources to face the challenges of the new *CRS Coordinator's Manual*. ≡ ≡ ≡

New ISO/CRS Specialists

The CRS is pleased to introduce two new ISO/CRS Specialists. One position is an addition to the team and the other is a replacement for Jimmy Chin, who retired early in 2013.

Thomas McGuire, CFM, began work as an ISO/CRS Specialist in April, coming from Charleston County, South Carolina, where he was the Floodplain Management Coordinator. Before that Tom was with Richard A. Greene & Associates in Carolina, Rhode Island. In both positions he tackled a variety of floodplain management and National Flood Insurance Program issues. In Charleston County he was also involved with the CRS. Tom will have Region I territory (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont).

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Gina Gabriel, CFM, also assumed her duties in April. She recently worked with Michael Baker, Jr., Engineering in Lakewood, Colorado, as a LOMA Analyst and in the past several years has run her own business as a legal investigator for law firms. While working with Michael Baker, Gina developed a working knowledge of FEMA's Map Modernization and its successor RiskMAP. She has been involved with compliance with the Endangered Species Act for FEMA Regions VIII, IX, and X and has performed technical reviews of hydrologic and hydraulic models developed as part of the LOMA/LOMR process. Gina's CRS territory will include as-yet undetermined states in Regions VIII and X.

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Welcome to both Tom and Gina! ≡ ≡ ≡

Get Ready to Participate in FEMA's Annual Risk Awareness Survey

Attention CRS Coordinators and other local officials: FEMA needs your help!

Each year since 2010, FEMA has conducted a nationwide survey on Risk Awareness among U.S. local officials. The results track trends and inform FEMA and community and county officials on ways to most effectively engage and support communities toward mitigation actions to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards.

You will soon have an opportunity to participate in this year's survey. In June you will receive an e-mail invitation with a direct link to the survey. Later, the national-level results, including your responses, will be shared with you via the CRS. Look in next month's *NFIP/CRS Update* newsletter for more details on the survey as well as key findings from last year's results.

FEMA appreciates your support. For details, contact Vince Brown at Vincent.Brown@fema.dhs.gov.

What's with the Program Data Table?

The Program Data Table that appears on page 230-13 of the 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual* is used to record data on changes in the number of buildings and acreage in a community's Special Flood Hazard Area and in those parts of its regulatory floodplain outside of the SFHA.

Many communities are asking what they have to do now. The short answer is, "Nothing, other than prepare for your next verification visit." At the next visit, the community will be asked for the data for only five lines on the Program Data Table:

- Line 6. Total number of buildings in the SFHA
- Line 13. Acreage of the SFHA
- Line 14. Primary source for the building data in Line 6
- Line 15. Primary source for the area data in Line 13
- Line 16. The period covered, i.e., the effective date of the data.

| CRS Program Data Table | A. In the SFHA | B. In a regulated floodplain outside the SFHA | C. In the rest of the community |
|--|----------------|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Last report's number of buildings in the SFHA (BSF) (line 6, last report) | | | |
| 2. Number of new buildings constructed since last report | + | | |
| 3. Number of buildings removed/demolished since last report | - | | |
| 4. Number of buildings affected by map revisions since last report (+ or -) | | | |
| 5. Number of buildings affected by corporate limits changes (+ or -) | | | |
| 6. Current total number of buildings in the SFHA (BSF) (total lines 1-5) | | | |
| 7. Number of substantial improvement/damage projects since last report | | | |
| 8. Number of repetitive loss properties mitigated since last report | | | |
| 9. Number of LOMRs and map revisions (not LOMAs) since last report | | | |
| 10. Acreage of the SFHA (aSFHA) as of the last report (line 13, last report) | | | |
| 11. Acreage of area(s) affected by map revisions since last report (+ or -) | | | |
| 12. Acreage of area(s) affected by corporate limits changes (+ or -) | | | |
| 13. Current acreage of the SFHA (aSFHA) (total lines 10-12) | | | |
| 14. Primary source for building data: | | | |
| 15. Primary source for area data: | | | |
| 16. Period covered: | | Current FIRM date | |
| <i>If available, the following data would be useful:</i> | | | |
| 17. Number of new manufactured homes installed since last report | | | |
| 18. Number of other new 1-4 family buildings constructed since last report | | | |
| 19. Number of all other buildings constructed installed since last report | | | |

At the visit, the ISO/CRS Specialist will explain the additional data that will be needed at each subsequent visit and annual recertification.

A new set of instructions, with more explanation of what is needed and suggestions on how the data may be obtained, is now available on the CRS website, www.CRSresources.org/200. ≡ ≡ ≡

Training Opportunities

EMI Courses with the New *Coordinator's Manual*

The dates for the Fiscal Year 2014 CRS courses at the Emergency Management Institute have been announced! "The Community Rating System" (E278) will be offered

- April 7–10, 2014;
- June 23–26, 2014; and
- August 11–14, 2014.

As you know, The CRS program is undergoing significant changes, and the new 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual* will be taught in the upcoming year's CRS courses. Familiarity with this edition will greatly help CRS communities maintain or improve their CRS classifications.

- Attendees of previous E278 CRS courses may want to repeat this course. Therefore, restrictions on repeat attendance have been waived.
- For continuing education credit for Certified Floodplain Managers, the ASFPM will award CECs earned at the E278 CRS course even if the CFM[®] attended the course when it was based on a previous *CRS Coordinator's Manual*.
- No more than two persons per community may attend at one time.

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Training Opportunities (cont.)

If you are a state or local government employee, and are accepted in the course, travel stipends are available and your lodging on campus is free. Transportation is provided from the airport to the campus (free) and YES, they return you to the airport on Friday! The only out-of-pocket expense will be your meal ticket, which is all-you-can-eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Please go to the EMI website for specific details at http://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/NETC_Welcome_Package.pdf. The application to attend along with tips can be found at <http://training.fema.gov/Apply/>. Signed applications should be submitted through your State Training Officer.

Let the CRS Come to You

In the coming year the CRS expects to conduct several sessions of the field-deployed CRS course (L278, the same as the Emergency Management Institute's E278, but tailored to local conditions). Any state, CRS Users Group, or organization that would like to host a course in its area should contact its FEMA Regional CRS Coordinator about requesting one for 2014. Their contact information is available at www.CRSresources.org/100.

More Help for CRS Communities

Don't forget that the CRS offers webinars and workshops to help communities with their Elevation Certificate and other requirements. If you are interested in having a webinar on the new *Coordinator's Manual*, the FEMA Elevation Certificate, or any other activity, contact your ISO/CRS Specialist.

Workshops and Training on the CRS

— The Community Rating System (E278) (field-deployed course is L278)

This is the all-purpose training course for the CRS. It is taught at both the Emergency Management Institute and at sites throughout the country at the request of interested communities, groups, or states. This course now uses the 2013 *CRS Coordinator's Manual*.

Prerequisite: To enroll in the CRS course, you must be a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM[®]), or have completed the National Flood Insurance Program course listed below (E273), or be a full-time floodplain manager with more than two years of experience specifically related to floodplain management.

Emergency Management Institute (Emmitsburg, Maryland) .. July 29—August 2, 2013;
..... April 7–10, 2014; June 23–26, 2014; August 11–14, 2014
Contact your state emergency management training office, EMI at (800) 238-3358 or
(301) 447-1035, or see <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMICourses/EMICourse.asp>.

Other Courses at the Emergency Management Institute

Besides the basic CRS course, FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers training on many related topics, including floodplain management, mitigation, and construction. These are oriented to local building, zoning, planning, and engineering officials. Tuition is free for

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Training Opportunities (cont.)

state and local government officials and travel stipends are available. Call the training office of your state emergency management agency, see <http://www.training.fema.gov/EMICourses/EMICourse.asp>, or call EMI at 1-800-238-3358 or (301) 447-1035.

- **HAZUS-MH for Flood (E172)**December 2–5, 2013; April 21–24, 2014
- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts (E194)** August 26–29, 2013;
..... August 25–28, 2014
- **Managing Floodplain Development through the NFIP (E273)**..... June 24–27, 2013
..... September 9–12, 2013; October 21–24, 2013;
.....March 17–20, 2014; May 5–8, 2014;
.....June 16–19, 2014; September 15-18, 2014

E273 is also field deployed periodically. Contact your State NFIP Coordinator for more information. Find your State Coordinator at <http://www.floods.org/index.asp?menuID=274>.

- **Retrofitting Floodprone Residential Buildings (E279)** April 14–17, 2014
- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts II (E282)** April 14–17, 2014
- **Advanced Floodplain Management Concepts III (E284)** July 8–11, 2013;
..... July 21–24, 2014
- **Residential Coastal Construction (E386)** August 5–8, 2013; August 18–21, 2014

CRS communities can receive CRS credit points after their staff members complete certain training sessions. Under Section 431.n, Staffing (STF) of the *CRS Coordinator's Manual*, five points are provided for each member of a community's floodplain permit staff who graduates from courses E194, E273, E278, E282, E284, or E386 (up to 25 points). Graduating from E279 is worth five points under Activity 360 (Flood Protection Assistance).

Statement of Purpose

The *NFIP/CRS Update* is a publication of the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System. It provides local officials and others interested in the CRS with news they can use.

The *NFIP/CRS Update* is produced in alternate months. It is distributed electronically, at no cost, to local and state officials, consultants, and other interested persons. Communities are encouraged to copy and/or circulate the *Update* and to reprint its articles in their own local, state, or regional newsletters. No special permission is needed.

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