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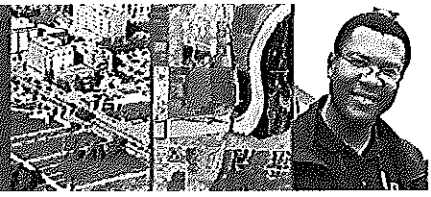

The New FEMA Flood Map Service Center

Significant Enhancements Taking Effect in Summer 2014

The FEMA Flood Map Service Center (MSC) is the official public source for flood hazard information produced in support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The latest generation MSC serves as a streamlined product portal that provides both general and advanced users with intuitive, powerful and completely free of charge access to flood hazard products and tools.

This document summarizes the major changes taking effect with the launch of the redesigned MSC in summer 2014.

All Products and Services Free of Charge

Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), Flood Insurance Studies (FIS) and all other information available on the MSC may be accessed and downloaded at no cost. This move realizes considerable efficiencies, enabling FEMA to retire a series of legacy applications that supported the purchase and delivery of products. These applications include the Digital Post Office (DPO), Express Document Delivery (EDDie) and EDDie for Disasters.

In addition, with free direct downloads now available to the general public, the MSC is discontinuing the purchase and shipment of physical orders. The designated local official for each community will continue to receive a printed FIS report and set of maps, as well as GIS data on hard disk, when new flood mapping studies are completed in that community.

Enhanced Address Search

For users looking to quickly find flood hazard information for a particular address or point of interest, the Address Search feature provides results through an easy-to-use map interface. New enhancements include the ability to download FIRMs and Letters of Map Change (LOMCs) directly from the search results page, as well as a direct link to view flood hazard GIS data for a selected area in the FEMA GeoPlatform.

Visit the MSC at

http://msc.fema.gov

Questions?

Contact the FEMA Map Information eXchange (FMIX)

Toll free: 1-877-FEMA-MAP
(1-877-336-2627)
FEMAMapSpecialist@riskmapcds.com
Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday, 8:00 am - 6:30 pm ET

Try our Live Chat Service, available 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET on the MSC

For information about flood insurance, visit the NFIP website

http://www.FloodSmart.gov

To view FEMA Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, visit the FEMA GeoPlatform

http://fema.maps.arcgis.com

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Integrated Product Search

The new Search All Products function delivers a comprehensive listing of all flood hazard products available on the MSC for a particular geographic area. Rather than going to multiple locations to search for different types of information, users are able to use one centralized search portal. All products are available for download directly from the search results.

Custom Subscription Service

A fully-customizable individual subscription service allows any user to receive email notifications when new products matching their provided parameters become available. Ideal for floodplain managers, community officials and others interested in one or more specific areas, this feature also enables subscribers to download new products directly from their subscription account.

An email address is all that is required to set up an account and individual subscriptions may be added, modified or removed at any time. Users may specify subscriptions by community, state, FEMA Region and product type.

With the move to free availability, prior paid subscription services are discontinued.

Convenient Multi-File Downloads

Download multiple files together at once, even when the combined file sizes are large. A new bundling feature provides the ability to combine multiple products into a single ZIP file. Users have the option of initiating a download immediately after the process of bundling into a ZIP file is complete or else waiting to download later at a more convenient time.

Products as a Service

Thanks to the new MSC systems infrastructure, the public can access hosted flood hazard information without having to navigate through the actual site. A static URL format and product nomenclature allows users to directly access and link to specific products if they know the product ID number. The products are served directly over a standard web HTTP connection.

This feature may be particularly valuable to local officials and stakeholders, who can use it to provide direct links to their communities' products on their own websites and in tailored printed materials. Floodplain managers and other flooding professionals also greatly benefit from this service, which allows them to quickly access a particular known product without having to execute a search for it.

Improved User Interface and User Experience

The enhanced MSC has prioritized the user's experience of the site from the very beginning of its design and development. Navigation is greatly simplified, the site's structure is streamlined and a significant amount of background information has been consolidated or migrated to the authoritative topical record on the main FEMA website. As a result, the ease and speed with which users are able to locate their desired information is greatly improved.

Upgraded Help Text and FAQ

To assist first-time and novice users in using the site, the updated MSC features strategically placed help text. Accessible by selecting a "?" icon, this feature enables users to seek clarification while maintaining a streamlined overall page design. Rather than displaying multiple paragraphs of text for each user to read through, the help text allows individuals to opt into additional information as needed.

For more detailed guidance and explanations, users also have access to an extensive set of responses to Frequently Asked Questions. Map Specialists from the FMIX are available by phone, email and chat during business hours to answer other questions if users need additional support.

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