



**Mississippi Emergency
Management Agency**
P.O. Box 5644
Pearl, MS 39288



**Mississippi Department of
Environmental Quality**
P.O. Box 2279
Jackson, MS 39289-1307

January 8, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Executive Officer / Local Floodplain Administrator

FROM: Al W. Goodman, Jr., CFM
NFIP State Coordinator / FPM Bureau Director

RE: **Newton County ‘Flood Risk Open House’**

The Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative Team (MEMA, MDEQ, and MGI, LLC) will conduct a final coordination meeting with officials from Newton County and the communities of Chunky, Decatur, Hickory, Newton, and Union at 3:00 p.m. on January 28, 2010.

On December 10th, a copy of the preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and a copy of the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) were mailed to you, which identified the flood risk in Newton County and the incorporated communities. An important and necessary component of this process is to offer an opportunity for you, your local officials, and your citizens to review the FIS and FIRM. Please compare your current map with the preliminary map and make note of any changes which may affect your citizens. This will enable you to make any appropriate notifications to residents. We have scheduled the following two sessions, the first to be attended by local officials, and the second is for the general public.

Newton Co. Local Official’s Meeting

When: Thursday, January 28, 2010
Time: 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Where: Newton County Courthouse
92 West Broad Street
Decatur, MS 39327

Newton Co. Flood Risk Open House

When: Thursday, January 28, 2010
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Where: Newton County Courthouse
92 West Broad Street
Decatur, MS 39327

Our staff will be able to address questions regarding flood protection, flood risk identification, and mitigation. We also encourage your floodplain, building and zoning, and engineering staff to attend as an opportunity to provide information on your local floodplain development permit requirements and ordinance, and other requirements within your community.

This “Open House” will be of particular interest to those living in or near Special Flood Hazard Areas, as well as realtors, insurance agents, developers, representatives of lending institutions, any local levee board, and members of the local media. We request that you also publicize this event utilizing whatever means you deem necessary to reach this target audience, such as your local newspaper, local libraries, post offices, community web sites, local television stations, or any other relevant organizations.

The format of the Flood Risk Open House is very informal. This is not a typical government/public meeting scenario; no presentations are made and there are no formal questions/statements from the public. The citizens sign in and visit the stations where they speak directly to the team and local officials. Stations will consist of a table for each community map and an insurance/NFIP information table. MGI, MDEQ, and MEMA will staff the tables. We request that the local floodplain administrator jointly staff the individual community map tables with us, in order to answer questions specific to your community or take comments from the citizens.

As a reminder, participation in the NFIP will require that your community adopt the new FIRM into a local flood damage prevention ordinance by the date when the FIRM goes into effect. We strongly encourage your community officials participation in these two events, for they will provide an opportunity for you and your staff to thoroughly review the preliminary FIS and FIRM and bring to the table any questions or concerns prior to your formal adoption process.

Thank you for your time and participation in this process, and we look forward to our continued collaboration. If you have any questions before January 28th, please contact me via e-mail at agoodman@mema.ms.gov.

Enclosure: Sample press release for your use in advertising the Flood Risk Open House which will be held from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Newton County “Flood Risk Open House” Scheduled

General public provided opportunity to find out more about floodplain management in their community.

Officials representing the Mississippi Flood Map Modernization Initiative Team will host a Flood Risk Open House from 4:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 28th in the Newton County Courthouse, located at 92 West Broad Street, Decatur.

The open house will provide the public with an opportunity to review the recently completed preliminary Flood Insurance Study (FIS) and its accompanying preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) that include base flood information and identification of areas subject to flood hazards within the county. The maps for Newton County and its incorporated communities are also available for viewing at the MDEQ web site at <http://geology.deq.ms.gov/floodmaps/status.aspx?county=Newton>

Local and state officials will be present to provide information about flood risk, flood insurance, floodplain development requirements, and the process used for floodplain mapping. Once the preliminary FIRMs become effective, these maps will be used by floodplain permit officials, builders and developers, lenders, realtors, insurance agents, and the general public to determine flood risk.

Property owners, realtors, lenders, and insurance agents are encouraged to attend and take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about flood risk and hazard mitigation within your community.

The maps can impact you directly, please contact your community Floodplain Administrator to learn if your home or business is located within a high hazard area, which will require flood insurance if you have a federally backed loan.