



# FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

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NEWSLETTER

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## AVAILABLE SERVICES FROM THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The Floodplain Management Services (FPMS) was established to carry out Section 206 of the Flood Control Act of 1960. Its objective is to encourage prudent use of the Nation's floodplains for the benefit of the national economy and general welfare by supporting comprehensive floodplain management planning at all appropriate governmental levels. The Program provides floodplain management services and conducts related activities which directly support its objective.

Assistance and guidance can be provided and/or "Special Studies" can be conducted on all aspects of Floodplain Management planning. This can range from helping a community identify present and future floodplain areas and related problems to a broad assessment of which of the FPM measures, flood modifying or damage modifying, may be appropriate. It also includes, but is not limited to, hurricane evacuation planning, flood warning and preparedness planning, and planning for permanent evacuation, relocation, and flood proofing.

Technical assistance of the type normally provided under the FPMS Program may also be provided on a cost-shared basis under Section 22 of PL 93-251, the Planning Assistance to States Program.

### CORPS CONTINUING AUTHORITIES PROGRAMS

Several programs are available to local governments to help solve small flood control, streambank erosion, beach erosion, harbor, and navigation problems under the Corps Continuing Authorities Program. These programs, also known as the Small Projects Program, consist of various legislative authorities such as Section 205 for small flood control projects, Section 14 for Emergency Streambank Protection, and others.

### HOW TO REQUEST CORPS ASSISTANCE UNDER ONE OF THESE PROGRAMS

Basic requirements to request Corps assistance consist of a letter from a local entity or governmental unit, citing the nature of the problem, urgency of a solution, and an intent to share in any required study and/or project cost, if a Federal interest is warranted. Questions about the programs can be addressed to the Planning Division, Fort Worth District, at 817/334-3876. All requests for assistance are subject to availability of funds, applicability of program to situation, and participation of non-Federal sponsor.

# LIGHTNING

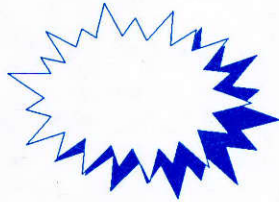
(Conner Vernon's 1993 Texas Weather Almanac)

Lightning is that great spark of electricity made famous by Ben Franklin's notorious kite experiment back in 1752. Lightning is nature's deadliest weather phenomenon. More people are killed by lightning every year than all the tornadoes and hurricanes combined! However, since lightning tends to strike one person at a time, it does not usually make the news headlines. On average, it kills more than 200 people every year in the U.S., ignites about 2,000 structures and starts 10,000 forest fires. Around the globe, lightning occurs approximately 8 million times a day!

A bolt of lightning can heat the surrounding air to a temperature three to five times hotter than the surface of the sun! This rapid rise in the temperature makes the air expand so quickly that a sound wave, called thunder, is created.

You can figure out about how many miles away you are from a lightning stroke by counting the number of seconds between the flash, and the thunder, then divide by five.

If you see lightning but don't hear thunder, the thunderstorm is probably more than 15 miles away.



## First Aid

A person struck by lightning and apparently "killed," does not continue to carry that electrical shock, and can be revived if you act quickly. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation should be administered immediately. If the victim does not have a pulse, cardiac massage is also necessary. When a group of people is affected, the apparently "dead" should be treated first. Those who are unconscious but still breathing will probably recover spontaneously, although burns and other injuries may require other first aid. Recovery from lightning strikes is usually complete if the proper action is taken quickly enough.



## Protect Yourself

1. When a thunderstorm threatens, get inside a house or large building, or inside an all-metal (not convertible) vehicle.
2. Inside the home, avoid using the telephone, except for emergencies. Phone lines can carry lethal shocks if struck by lightning.
3. If you're outside, with no time to reach a safe building or an automobile, follow these rules:
  - ▶ Do not stand underneath, natural lightning rods such as tall, isolated trees in open areas.
  - ▶ Avoid projecting above the surrounding landscape, as you would do if you were standing on a hilltop, in an open field, on the beach, or fishing from a small boat.
  - ▶ Get out of and away from open water.
  - ▶ Get away from tractors and other metal farm equipment.
  - ▶ Get off of and away from motorcycles, scooters, golf carts and bicycles. Put down golf clubs.
  - ▶ Stay away from wire fences, clotheslines, metal pipes, rails and other metallic paths which could carry lightning to you from some distance away.
  - ▶ Avoid standing in small isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
  - ▶ In a forest, seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees. In open areas, go to a low place such as a ravine or valley. Be alert for flash floods.
  - ▶ If you're hopelessly isolated in a level field and you feel your hair stand on end, indicating lightning is about to strike, drop to your knees and bend forward putting your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.

# ON TOP OF THE PROGRAM!

On April 9, 1993, the Texas Water Commission received a brochure that **Matagorda County** developed "**FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT, QUESTIONS and ANSWERS**". This is another good example of Increased Public Awareness.

The National Flood Insurance Program publishes brochures and booklets that touch on every aspect of flooding and are easily obtainable. All you need to do is fill out an order form (call us to get a order form.) After that let the public know via the media or whatever system works best for you (e.g., enclose brochures in utility bills). **Remember**, public awareness is a major key to gaining compliance.

Matagorda County, Mr. Ed Schulze, Director and Mr. Doyle Volkmer, Floodplain Administrator, should be commended for adhering to the NFIP Regulations and should serve as a model for other communities to follow.

Other Communities that should be commended for Increased Public Awareness are as following:

**Burnet County** published a flyer: "**THE COUNTY OF BURNET**"

A reminder from the Burnet County Floodplain Administration.

"Along with your many building plans, don't forget to get your building permit...first!"

**Austin, Texas** published a flyer: "**SAFETY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS**"

"Spring in Austin is a beautiful time of year, but it can also bring some of the most severe weather of the year. Be prepared for emergencies such as flash floods, tornadoes, and other severe weather by having home emergency supplies and a family emergency plan.

An emergency checklist to help you prepare your emergency supplies and family emergency plan begins on page 11 of the "Fingertip Facts" section of the Greater Austin telephone book. The Fingertip Facts section is the glossy paper section between the white business pages and the yellow pages."

**WRITE AND TELL US HOW YOUR COMMUNITY IS CONDUCTING ITS INCREASED PUBLIC AWARENESS**



# TEXAS FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

The Texas Floodplain Management Association (TFMA) is conducting its annual membership drive. As of June 18, 1993, TFMA has 122 members that cover all parts of the State. If you are involved in floodplain management, you should belong to this is one professional organization. The TFMA Annual Conference is set for August 24-26, 1993 in Kerrville. The conference will start at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday and last until Thursday at 12:00 noon. Election of officers will be held. The length of office is two years. This year's conference will be training oriented, with a new format of mini-workshops. Development of TFMA's Professional Certification Program will be on high on the agenda. For more information contact your nearest Regional Director.

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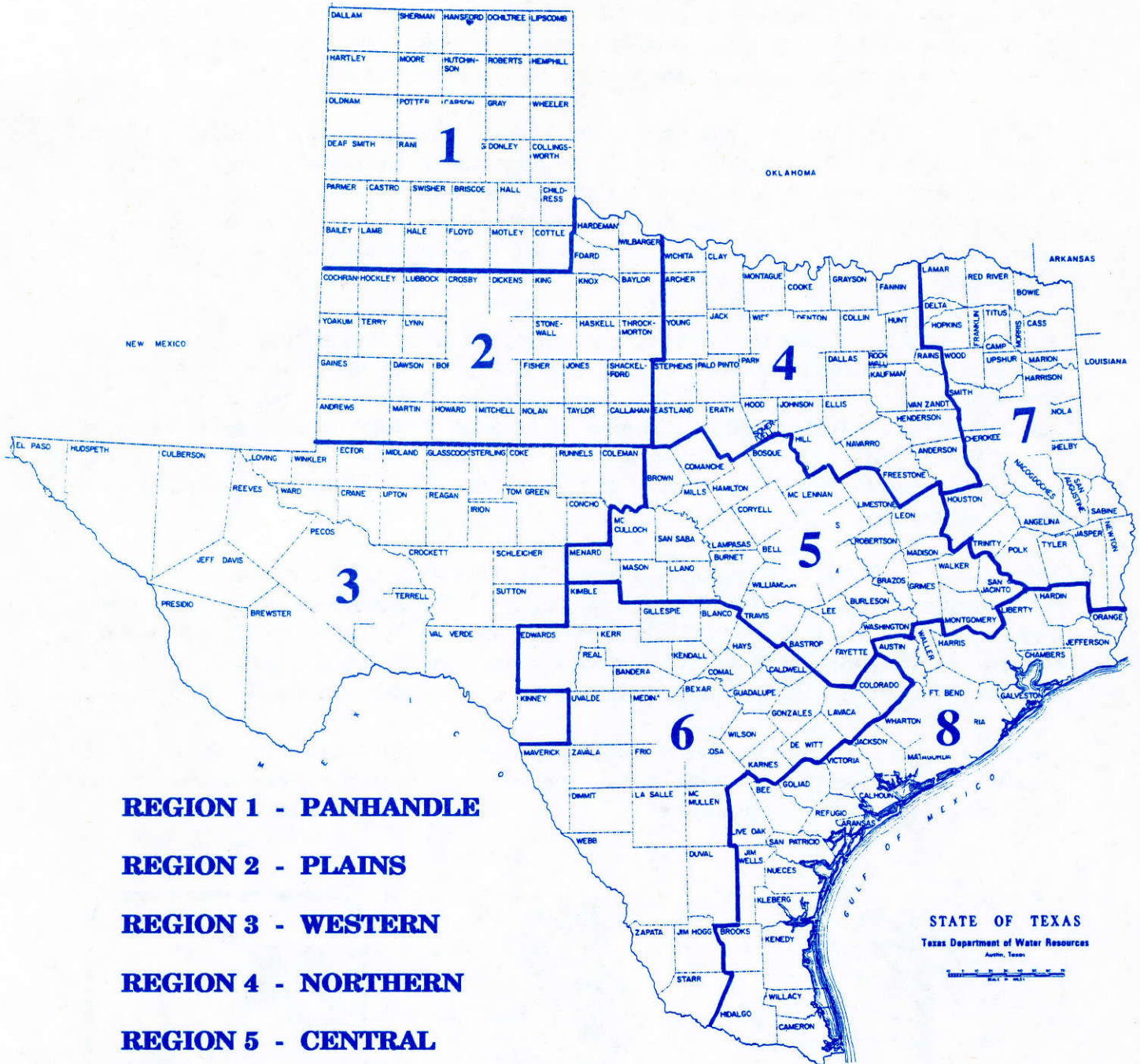
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# TEXAS FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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- REGION 1 - PANHANDLE**
- REGION 2 - PLAINS**
- REGION 3 - WESTERN**
- REGION 4 - NORTHERN**
- REGION 5 - CENTRAL**
- REGION 6 - SOUTHERN**
- REGION 7 - EASTERN**
- REGION 8 - COASTAL**

STATE OF TEXAS  
Texas Department of Water Resources  
Austin, Texas



# WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

*(Debris Line, May 1993)*

Should you spend much time on a beach in Texas you will encounter sargassum weed. This weed is also called gulfweed, rockweed and sea holly and it is a member of the same genus as brown algae. The weed derives its name from the Portuguese word for grapes because of the small pea-size air bladders which look like tiny amber grapes. It is these air bladders which support the weed on open water.

Within this weed, one may find *Planes minutus* or a very small (pea-sized) crab which measures about one inch at maturity. One might also find ghost-like shrimp by the name of *Latreutas focurum*. Or one could find *Histrio histrio*, more commonly known as the sargassum fish. Sargassum weed is important to the Texas coast in that it provides support for blowing sand and aids in the development of stable dunes. But where does this weed come from?

It comes from the Sargasso Sea which is an irregular oval-shaped area approximately 2 million square miles in size located in the North Atlantic Ocean. The early navigators who sailed their small ships to North America saw the Sargasso Sea as patches of sargassum weed that seemed to form wide-spreading meadows. Soon there were legends and myths about the region which told of large islands of thickly matted seaweed inhabited by huge monsters of the deep. Once a ship sailed into this area it could not escape.

The Equatorial Current, Canaries Current, North Atlantic Drift and the Gulf Stream rotate around this area and form the Sargasso Sea. The water has an unusually deep blue color; a high salt content (3.7 per cent); a high temperature (up to 83 degrees Fahrenheit) and extreme clearness. These features result chiefly from the location of the sea away from any land mass or islands and its average depth of over 3 miles.

Since an area so far from the Texas coast plays an important role in the nature of the coastal area, do we wonder what impact we have as we change the coastal area to fulfill what we think are our needs?



# APPLICATION / CERTIFICATION FORMS

As you are aware, one of Federal Insurance Administration's (FIA's) goals is to ensure that National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) maps reflect the most accurate and up-to-date information available. To accomplish this goal, a number of administrative procedures were established to effect changes to NFIP maps. Over the years, they have standardized these administrative procedures to make requesting a map change a simpler process and to make a determination. On October 1, 1992, FIA embarked on their latest effort to make the map change process quicker and more efficient.

As of October 1, 1992 FIA is requiring that requesters fill out application/certification forms for most types of map change requests. Requesters who wish to request map amendments or map revisions based on fill to NFIP maps will be required to fill out the Application/Certification Forms and Instructions of Letters of Map Amendment, Letters of Map Revision (Based on Fill), and Conditional Letters of Map Revision (Based on Fill). Those requesters who wish to request map revisions based on new or corrected flooding information will be required to fill out the Application/Certification Forms and Instruction for Conditional Letters of Map Revision, Letters of Map Revision, and Physical Map Revisions.

In the past, it was not unusual for FIA to have to contact a requester several times to obtain the information necessary to support a map amendment or revision request. The FIA developed these forms so that the requester will understand what data are required for his or her request. As a result, requesters will have an excellent chance of sending FIA a complete data package the first time. For this reason, FIA believes that these forms will significantly decrease the amount of time that it takes to process map amendment and map revision requests and issue our determination.

To receive copies of the application/certification forms and instructions, contact your Federal Emergency Management Agency Regional Office:

**Federal Emergency Management Agency  
NTH Division - Region VI - Federal Center  
800 North Loop 288 / Denton, Texas 76201-3698**

## ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBSTANTIALLY DAMAGED BUILDINGS

*FEMA-213 / May 1991*

Deep floods or floods with high velocity waters frequently cause substantial damage to both residential and commercial buildings. Communities participating in the Nation Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have certain responsibilities for permitting the repair and reconstruction of these "substantially damaged" buildings.

The purpose of this document is to answer many of the questions regarding NFIP regulations and policy governing substantially damaged structures. The questions and answers in the booklet are guidance materials designed for local building inspectors, zoning administrators, and other permit officials that enforce the floodplain management requirements of a community participating in the NFIP. Although this booklet is designed primarily for community permit officials, in certain situations the booklet's usefulness may be enhanced if it is also made available to owners of damaged structures.

The information provided is as current as possible, but changes in the NFIP regulations are made periodically.

The enforcement of the substantial improvement requirement as defined in the NFIP regulations (44 Code of Federal Regulations, 59.1) frequently becomes a major concern for local officials after a community has experienced serious damages as a result of a flood or other disaster. In particular, many questions are asked by community officials concerning permits issued for the repair of damages structures.

To receive copies of the Answers to Questions About Substantially Damaged Buildings, contact your Federal Emergency Management Agency Regional Office:

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**REMEMBER**

**Your community receives one copy of this Newsletter. Please circulate to all key personnel with responsibilities in Floodplain Management or Emergency Management.**



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