

The BFE*

* BASE FLOOD ELEVATION



OKLAHOMA
Water Resources Board



2026 OWRB - OFMA Training

In 2026, the rivers may rise and the rains may fall - but across Oklahoma, communities will be more prepared than ever.

That's because the **Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB)** and the **Oklahoma Floodplain Managers Association (OFMA)** are once again teaming up to bring floodplain management training to communities across the state. Their shared mission is simple: **help more people understand how to live, build, and plan safely in flood-prone areas**. And the best part? These trainings are **open to anyone** who wants to learn more - local officials, planners, engineers, emergency managers, and even curious residents.

The 2026 training journey kicks off in western Oklahoma on **March 17 in Clinton**, where participants will gather to learn the fundamentals of floodplain management and the real-world impact of smart development decisions.

Next, the training heads east to **Langley on April 1** as an OFMA only offering, continuing the effort to make floodplain knowledge accessible to communities near Oklahoma's lakes and waterways.

By **April 14**, the program reaches **Woodward**, bringing practical tools and guidance to the High Plains. Then on **May 6**, the training stops in **Oklahoma City**, giving metro-area professionals and residents an opportunity to sharpen their understanding of flood risk, regulations, and resilience.

After a summer break, the tour resumes in **Broken Arrow on August 18**, where growth and development make floodplain awareness especially important. From there, the team travels north to **Ponca City on September 15**, sharing strategies that help protect both people and property.

Fall brings two more opportunities to join in: **Ardmore on October 13** and **McAlester on November 3**, rounding out a statewide effort to strengthen floodplain knowledge from border to border.

At each stop, attendees can expect practical guidance, real examples, and the chance to connect with others who care about safer, smarter communities. Whether someone is brand new to floodplain management or has years of experience, the trainings are designed to be welcoming, informative, and useful.

In 2026, OWRB and OFMA aren't just offering classes - they're building a network of Oklahomans who are better prepared for the realities of flooding and better equipped to protect the places they call home.

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Words from the Chair

Kenny Schwab PE, SE, CFM | Chair
Assistant City Manager | City of Broken Arrow

Happy new year! I hope everyone has a blessed 2026. As an organization, OFMA is looking for ways to expand our leadership roles both in getting more people involved and in expanding our reach as a professional organization. This should be no surprise. We have talked a lot about it for the past few years, and now, in my opinion, that day is here.

In my previous letter to the membership, I spoke about the Leadership Pipeline and closed the letter talking about a few Constitutional Amendments that the Board will place in front of the membership in early 2026. That time is here. At the end of January, the Board finalized the wording of the amendments, and we followed up with placing that wording in front of the membership. The point of the amendments is to create more leadership roles and help divide the work up among our members.

First and foremost, we propose redefining the Vice Chair's position. If you have been a part of any of the technical sessions, awards banquet, and annual conference over the past, then you have seen the work of the Vice Chair. That individual puts forth an awful lot of effort in conjunction with others to make those functions work. The Board has elected to make two (2) vice chair positions. The First Vice Chair will serve in the place of the Chair, if that individual is unable to perform the duties, and will still serve as the technical session and annual conference coordinator and liaison. The new Second Vice Chair will serve as the coordinator and liaison for the awards banquet and, more importantly,

will assist the First Vice Chair in all planning aspects of the technical session and annual conference. This will allow the Second Vice Chair to learn the processes and procedures for a one-year period before they are thrust into the leadership role for those events.

Another exciting new Board position that membership will be asked to consider is the Young Professional Officer. I have been a part of several organizations that have incorporated this concept into their organization. Each one has prospered because of the new energy and excitement induced into the organization. OFMA is growing exponentially in our young professional membership. We want to embrace, encourage, and provide more opportunities for this critical part of our membership. A Young Professional Officer can help with this core mission.

Look for these Constitutional Amendments in your inbox. I will close this letter like I did my last one. I encourage everyone in this organization to find a way to get involved. In truth, we need you! The strength of our organization is its leadership. The leaders help grow the power of the members and help guide us as one united voice. I believe there are new and exciting opportunities for others within this organization. Leadership takes you!

Keep doing what you do to keep your community and this state safe!!

Kenneth D. Schwab

Save the Date

Spring Technical Workshop

April 7, 2026

River Spirit Casino Resort,
8330 Riverside Pkwy, Tulsa, OK 74137



FEMA

Adopting New Flood Insurance Maps: Community Responsibilities Under the NFIP

Whenever FEMA issues new or revised Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports, participating communities must update their floodplain management regulations to adopt the new flood hazard data. If the community's existing ordinance already meets NFIP requirements, this may simply involve updating the map reference section. However, if FEMA adds new types of data - such as Base Flood Elevations (BFEs), regulatory floodways, or coastal high-hazard zones - the ordinance may need additional provisions. The Letter of Final Determination (LFD) explains which sections of the NFIP regulations (44 CFR 60.3) the community must adopt based on the updated data.

Communities have six months from the date of the LFD to adopt compliant regulations, and the changes must be approved by FEMA and the State before the FIRM and FIS become effective. FEMA sends reminder letters 90 days and 30 days before the effective date. If the required regulations are adopted and approved in time, the community remains in good standing in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

When adopting these regulatory updates, communities must also follow their state's legal procedures for adopting ordinances or resolutions. In Oklahoma, this includes complying with the **Open Meeting Act**, which requires proper public notice of meetings, posting of agendas that clearly state the proposed flood map adoption, and conducting the vote in a meeting open to the public. Following these procedures helps ensure the adoption is legally valid and transparent.

If a community fails to adopt the required regulations before the effective date, it will be suspended from the NFIP. Suspension has serious consequences: residents cannot purchase or renew NFIP flood insurance policies; certain federal grants, loans, mortgage insurance, and disaster assistance become unavailable for properties in mapped flood hazard areas; and lenders must notify borrowers that federal disaster assistance will not be available. Communities can regain eligibility by adopting compliant regulations, but they may also have to address any non-compliant development that occurred during the suspension.



FEMA

Flood Data Application

FEMA has launched a new Archived Flood Data application, offering an alternative to submitting PDF requests through the FEMA Engineering Library. The new platform allows users to manage requests online with several added benefits, including:

- Progress tracking
- Faster processing
- Support from Engineering Library staff
- Virtually guided walkthrough
- Secure payments through Pay.gov
- Secure login through Login.gov

While PDF requests remain available, FEMA encourages users to create an account and submit archived flood data requests online for a more efficient experience.

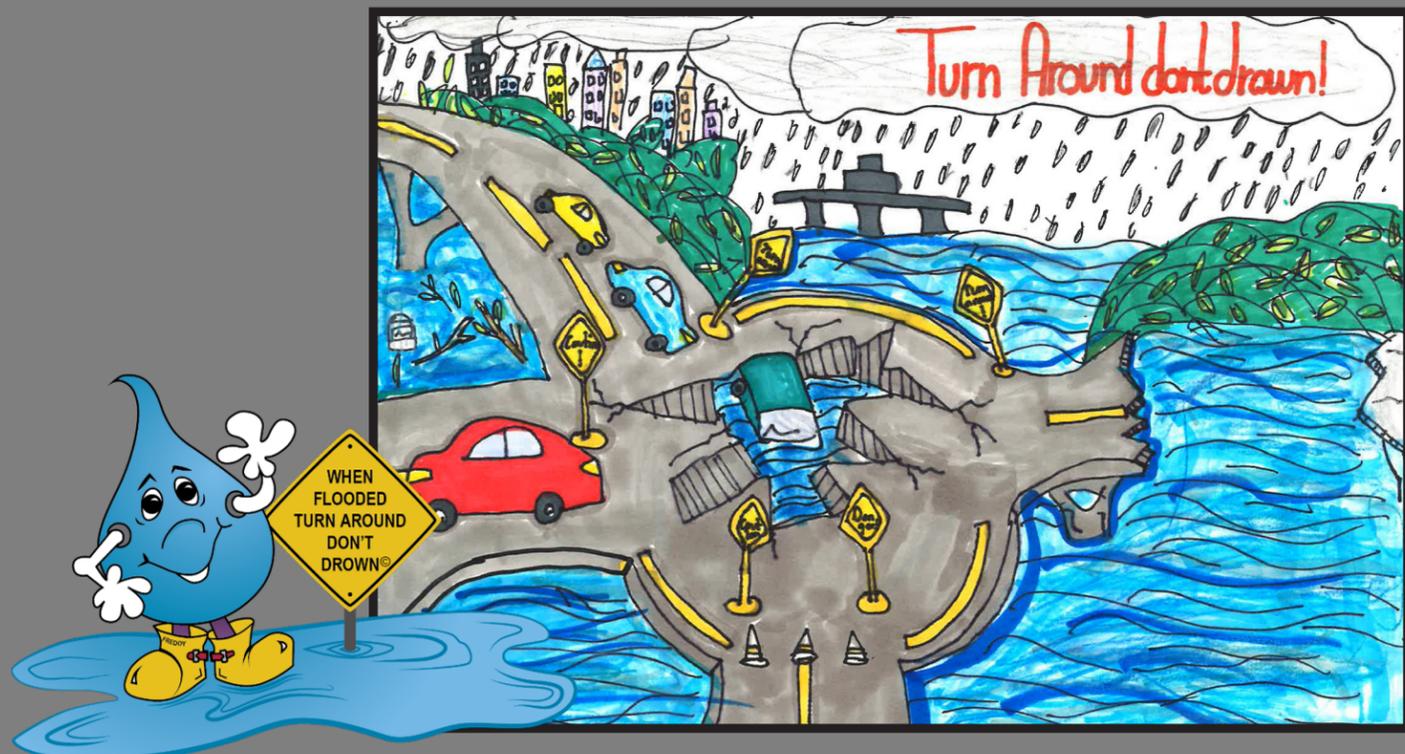
Visit: [Request | Archived Flood Data](#)

Calling Grade School Artists!

Turn Around Don't Drown Flood Safety Poster Contest

Each year more deaths occur due to flooding than any other thunderstorm-related hazard. Why? The main reason is people underestimate the force and power of water. Many of the deaths occur in automobiles that are swept downstream. Many drownings are preventable, but too many people continue to drive around the barriers that warn you that the road is flooded and Turn Around Don't Drown. Participation in the Turn Around Don't Drown Flood Safety Poster Contest helps children learn and inform their parents about flooding

hazards. A particularly timely subject given last year's record flooding. Plus, students and their teachers could win cash prizes. If this is something your local school (third through fifth graders) would like to participate in, please contact your Region Representative (contact information on Page 8) to receive 2026 OFMA calendars, including this year's calendar contest guidelines. Calendar requests deadline April 1, 2026.



ARCHIVED FLOOD DATA



Make your request for technical data and administrative information for Flood Insurance Studies and flood maps through FEMA's new Archived Flood Data website. Get your information easier than before!

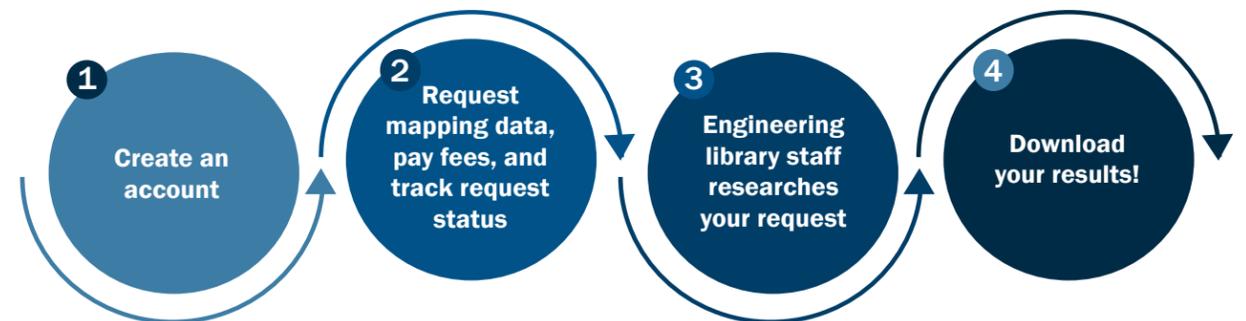
 The digital process is an alternative to the PDF request form and enhances the customer experience with faster service and a guided, interactive workflow.

The New Website for Requesting Flood Insurance Study Data Features

-  Two request options – Guided walkthrough or streamlined approach
-  Live chat and direct messaging with staff

-  Secure login and online fee payments
-  Customer dashboard to track requests and retrieve research results

How the Request Process Works



AVAILABLE DATA TYPES

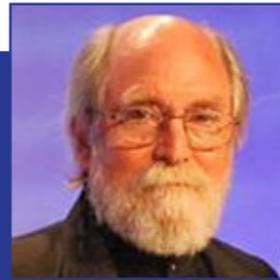
- Engineering Analysis
 - Coastal and riverine hydraulic/hydrology data
- Mapping
 - GIS and terrain mapping
- Individual Letters of Map Change (LOMC)
 - LOMA, LOMR
- Survey

FOR HELP

The FEMA Mapping and Insurance eXchange (FMIX) Customer Care Center provides expert assistance for flood mapping and insurance questions.

FEMA-FMIX@fema.dhs.gov | 877.336.2627





OFMA DRT Corner

Rev. W. B. "Bill" Smith, PE, CFM | OFMA DRT Coordinator

The OFMA Disaster Response Team (DRT) will be preparing for the Spring 2026 Flood season over the winter. Supplies will be checked. We are in need of additional volunteers. We currently have about 25 active volunteers.

We are trying to schedule a basic training program during the OFMA Spring Technical Workshop for DRT volunteers who are new or want a refresher course prior to the Spring Flooding (??) Season. Please sign up for this training when registering for the Spring Workshop or please notify Bill Smith, P.E. CFM, DRT Coordinator, by e-mail if you intend to participate in the training.

We continue to request that communities "pre-enroll" with the DRT Coordinator in the event that your community needs the assistance of the DRT.

HINT for the Month

Has your community been "cleaning ditches, drainage channels, and culverts" this winter in preparation for the spring rains?? If not, it's not too late – remember that accumulated debris will cause debris to catch and cause higher water surface elevations on the upstream areas that could flood structures. Don't forget to "permit yourself" for any modifications to the drainage conveyance structures – channels, culverts, etc.

Save the Date

2026 OFMA Annual Conference
September 21-23, 2026

Osage Casino Hotel
 951 West 36th Street North
 Tulsa, OK

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