

# HAZUS HOT ZONE

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## In This Issue

**Hazus at the Annual Risk Analysis Division Meeting**

**Hazus Higher Education Resources Consortium: Time to Get Involved**

**Hazus User of the Year: Lisa Graff**

**Hazus User Group Updates**

**Hazus Website Redesign**

**USGS and FEMA Collaborate**

**Software Updates and Releases**

**Hazus Events Update**

## Hazus at the Annual Risk Analysis Division Meeting

Stacy Robinson, STARR

In December 2010, the FEMA Risk Analysis Division gathered over 300 staff and contractors for a weeklong workshop focusing on Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (MAP). The vision for Risk MAP is to deliver quality data that increases public awareness and leads to action that reduces risk to life and property. Hazus was included in workshop discussions because it is an integral part of the risk assessment portion of the Risk MAP endeavor. Risk MAP builds on flood hazard data and maps produced during the Flood Map Modernization (Map Mod) program.

Eric Berman, Hazus Program Manager, Kevin Mickey of the Polis Center and Stacy Robinson of STARR (PBS&J) came together for a session entitled "Hazus and Risk MAP." Kevin Mickey informed the audience of ongoing disaster planning initiatives in the Midwest, including a discussion of how the local planning process in local communities has been refined. Level 2 Hazus analysis plays an important role in this region, as data is collected and communities collaborate to model hazards through Hazus to affect the development of mitigation strategies. He was able to present several successful examples of utilizing the Hazus methodology. Stacy Robinson presented an overview of how and where Hazus will continue to fit into Risk MAP, including a discussion of how Hazus results will be presented on new products such as the Flood Risk Map and Flood Risk Report. Hazus results in-

cluding dollar losses will be provided in tabular and spatial form to help communities gain an understanding of the scale of their potential losses. It also identifies vulnerable areas that require fur-



Slide from presentation given at Risk Analysis Division Meeting.

ther analysis or that should be high priorities for taking action to reduce risks through mitigation. The first step for communities is for them to visualize their susceptibility to risks as referred to in the above graphic.

As communities continue to realize their risks, Hazus and Risk Map will provide information and the tools to best prepare them for emergency events.

## Hazus Website Redesign

The New Year brings a New Look! We have released a brand-new edition of the Hazus website! Make sure you visit Hazus on [fema.gov](http://fema.gov) to see the new and improved streamlined site. The redesign has a look and feel that matches other FEMA and DHS web pages. Inspired and guided by suggestions from the Hazus user community, the flow of information is now faster, easier and more intuitive than ever. You will notice the left hand navigation bar has been expanded to include more information. The new links are: Program Announcements, Detail, Applications, Users, Training, Conferences, Resources and Contacts. The site will have more current Hazus information and more time sensitive announcements. For instance, the Users page lists the dates and times for National Hazus User Group conference calls.

We have also expanded the information available by adding links to documents in the FEMA Library. You can now link directly to Hazus User Success Stories, the Hot Zone Newsletters and examples of Hazus Applications from the site.

The new site is a dynamic space that will continue to grow with the Hazus Program. The number of views to the site increases each month. This new user-friendly design should help to ensure the site continues to receive an increasing audience and meet the needs of the user community.

Don't delay, go visit us at <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/index.shtm>.

## Hazus Higher Education Resources Consortium – Time to Get Involved

Through the dedicated efforts of higher education constituents nationwide, the Hazus Higher Education Resources Consortium (HERC) has begun to gain momentum. The mission of the HERC is to classify and distribute information regarding Hazus use within the higher education community for the purpose of fostering collaboration among institutions of higher learning and FEMA, as well as promoting Hazus use and analysis. The vision of the HERC is a vibrant networking and information-sharing user group considered by FEMA and Hazus users as a Hazus resource for higher education. The Hazus Outreach Team is currently working on a strategic plan for the HERC that will include a list of goals, objectives, and strategies for how Hazus will work with the HERC to achieve its vision. Priorities include creating a space for academics conducting research to seek teaming partners and to create a shared resource of how

Hazus is used on campuses across the country. In addition, the information collected will serve as feedback to FEMA regarding the use of Hazus and further the software's technology.

On the November 16, 2010 HERC call it was recommended that the HERC have two sub-groups, Application and Research. The key threads of information from that call include:

- The HERC should interact with universities using Hazus in teaching and research programs.
- A speaker list, including HUG Leaders will be developed to assist schools in need of guest lecturers.
- The HERC will actively involve the Hazus Development team.

## Hazus User of the Year: Lisa Graff



Lisa Graff, Illinois State Water Survey

Congratulations to Lisa Graff, GIS Team Manager of the Illinois State Water Survey (ISWS). She is the 2010 4th Quarter Hazus User of the Year. Ms. Graff is a leader in the Hazus user community and an active member of the Central Hazus User Group (CHUG). She has earned both Hazus Trained Professional and Practitioner credentials, and is leading a team of GIS Specialists developing Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM's) and other Hazus map products for FEMA's Risk MAP program. Ms. Graff is also a Certified Floodplain Manager.

Ms. Graff has performed Hazus Level 2 flood analyses for Local Hazard Mitigation Plans covering Henderson, Hancock, Mercer, and Pike counties in Illinois.

Ms. Graff is also an active Hazus presenter. She shares her work with University of Illinois students, presenting her knowledge of Hazus and

its capabilities in mitigation planning. Ms. Graff and her team have also collaborated with students to locate local data and incorporate it into the analysis of critical facilities using Hazus. Ms. Graff believes the critical facility data secured by the students will be a great starting point in the recently funded Grundy County, Illinois mitigation planning initiative.

Ms. Graff regularly participates in Risk MAP discovery meetings, presenting depth grids and other Hazus analyses. Ms. Graff was a panelist at the 2010 Annual Hazus Conference in the Hazus User Group Session. She has also presented her work with Hazus at the Illinois GIS Association (ILGISA) Conference.

FEMA is proud to present Ms. Graff with the 2010 4th Quarter Hazus User of the Year Award!

## Using Hazus?

If you are using Hazus as part of a university based project please let us know by sending an email to [jamie@jamiicaplan.com](mailto:jamie@jamiicaplan.com) with a description of your project and any appropriate links or collateral. We are generating a database of projects that will be publicly accessible for the purpose of fostering collaboration.

For more information on the HERC, please visit [www.usehazus.com/herc](http://www.usehazus.com/herc). The Hazus Outreach Team is hosting HERC conference calls on a quarterly basis; the calls are open to anyone interested. The next call is scheduled for February 15, 2011, 4:30-5:30 pm Eastern Time. To join the calls please contact [jamie@jamiicaplan.com](mailto:jamie@jamiicaplan.com).

## Hazus User Group Updates

We are pleased to announce the formation of the Idaho HUG. Please join us in welcoming their leaders, Chris Corwin, GIS Specialist, Blaine County Emergency Communications; Ryan McDaniel, Cooperating Technical Partner Coordinator, Idaho Department of Water Resources; and Julie Brown Sendra, GISP HAZUS Practitioner and former GIS Manager, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. These Hazus enthusiasts along with Jeff Brislawn and Shelby Hudson, the leaders of the Rocky Mountain HUG, have formed the country's newest user group and we are excited to welcome them to the network. Contact information may be found on their website at [www.usehazus.com/idhug](http://www.usehazus.com/idhug).

In other HUG news, Florida HUG (FLHUG) leader Chris Zambito, Dewberry, is creating a Hazus Program presentation for emergency management and public safety staff from local universities in west central Florida. The presentation will feature the FLHUG and the HERC.

Bert Struik, Geological Survey of Canada, hosted the first Canadian Hazus Users Teleconference on January 11th. Efforts are underway in Canada to implement a Hazus Program similar to the one in the United States. Working with FEMA and their Canadian counterparts, progress is being made on the inventory and potential training programs.

On the December 14, Topic Specific HUG Call, Tim Lahmers presented his research regarding the effect of Digital Elevation Model's (DEM) on Hazus outputs specifically for flooding on the Monongahela River in California, Pennsylvania. The Journal of Emergency Management is scheduled to publish his research paper; therefore, his thesis is not available online at this time. We will post links to the article and final paper when published. Congratulations Tim!

The Central Hazus Users Group (CHUG) has started a Speaker Series. Their first presentation will be hosted by Neil Devadasan, The Polis Center, and Scott Morlock; U.S. Geological Survey. It will explore and demonstrate research done over the past two years as part of a collaborative project done by the Indiana Silver Jackets examining the use of Hazus. The purpose of this research was to derive a methodology for producing rapid and credible estimates of flood losses based on credible local structure and hazard data. Interested users can participate in CHUG calls by contacting [kmicky@iupui.edu](mailto:kmicky@iupui.edu).

Hazus users are encouraged to participate in HUG calls that are outside their region. A list of upcoming calls can be found on the [USEHAZUS.com](http://USEHAZUS.com) homepage at [www.usehazus.com](http://www.usehazus.com). Upcoming calls in February & March are listed on the right hand sidebar.

## HUG Call Schedule

- February 3rd, 11:00 - Noon pm Eastern Time Idaho HUG Call
  - February 15th, 1:30 - 2:30 pm Eastern Time HUG Leadership Call
  - February 15th, 3:00 - 4:00 pm Eastern Time HUG Topic Specific Call
- Silvana Croope, Delaware Department of Transportation
- "Integrating Hazus Data and Outputs to the Decision Support System"
- February 15th, 4:30 - 5:30 pm Eastern Time Hazus HERC Call
  - March 15th, 1:30 - 2:30 pm Eastern HUG Leadership Call
  - March 15th, 3:00 - 4:00 pm Eastern HUG Topic Specific Call

## USGS and FEMA Collaborate

FEMA has released a new Hazus Success Story featuring a flood mapping and risk assessment pilot study between themselves and the U.S. Geological Survey. Working together, they are developing a Web-based module that incorporates Hazus flood loss estimates to the real-time flood inundation mapping (RT-FIM) site in Albany, Georgia. The RT-FIM tool, developed for flood response and mitigation, provides digital geospatial flood-inundation maps that show flood water extent and depth on the land surface. Flood inundation maps which are tied to USGS-real-time stream gage data and National Weather Service flood forecast sites, enable officials to make timely operational and public safety decisions during floods, and to better plan for and mitigate the effects of future flood events. USGS pilot projects to evaluate this new technology are currently underway in nine different states. Readers can download this success story at [http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/hz\\_resources.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/hz_resources.shtm).



## Software Updates and Releases

Have you ordered your copy? Hazus-MH MR5 has been released and can be ordered through the Map Service Center online in their product catalog at [www.msc.fema.gov](http://www.msc.fema.gov) or by calling 1-877-336-2627. Included in the MR5 release are several improvements to the usability and functionality of the software including creation of study regions by HUC-8 watersheds (for a flood-only study region) and importing multiple-user-defined flood depth grids with differing return periods. MR5 also adds an auto patching feature for future updates and releases. The Comprehensive Data Management

System (CDMS) version 2.6 is now available as well. CDMS is a complementary tool to Hazus-MH and provides users with the capability to update and manage statewide datasets. Utilizing CDMS allows Hazus users the ability to enhance the quality of their analysis and results. CDMS functions as a single user or shared desktop application. New features of v2.6 include:

- Operates only with Hazus-MH MR5.
- Operates on Windows XP SP3 and Windows 7 (32-bit only).
- Operates on ArcGIS 9.3.1 SP1

CDMS v2.6 can be downloaded from the FEMA library.

Stay tuned for more exciting release information: Hazus 2.0 is coming soon!

## Contact Information

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### Hazus User Groups (HUGs)

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## Hazus Events Update

The Hazus Program participates in a number of events throughout the year to disseminate information to the planning, GIS, floodplain management, and emergency management communities about new Hazus-MH software capabilities

and functionality. Our goal is to educate Hazus users and gather feedback on how to further improve the tool's ability to accurately assess risk and quantify losses. Look for us at the conferences below.

| CONFERENCE   | DATES              | LOCATION        |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|
| ESRI Federal Users Conference                            | Jan 19- Jan 21     | Washington, DC  |
| National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) | March 20- March 23 | Arlington, VA   |
| American Planning Association (APA) Planning Conference  | April 9- April 12  | Boston, MA      |
| National Hurricane Conference                            | April 18- April 22 | Atlanta, GA     |
| National Flood Conference                                | May 1- May 4       | New Orleans, LA |
| Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)         | May 15- May 20     | Louisville, KY  |
| COM.geo  | May 23- May 25     | Washington, DC  |
| Solutions for Coastal Disasters Conference               | June 25- June 29   | Anchorage, AK   |
| ESRI International                                       | July 11- July 15   | San Diego, CA   |