

CRS USERS GROUP MEETING

December 16, 2013

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Pierce County Public Works
2702 South 42nd St, Suite 109
Tacoma WA 98409

Attendees: Dave Carlton, Becca Croft, Dennis Dixon, Mary Hurner, Marlene Jacobs, Deborah Knight, Anne-marie Marshall-Dody, Dennis Osborn, Katy Vanderpool, Monica Walker, French Wetmore

Verification Preparation – Lessons from the first year

By Marlene Jacobs - CRS Specialist, ISO Community Hazard Mitigation

- Under the new 2013 CRS Manual, 20 communities received verification visits. The communities range from Class 9 up to Class 4. As part of the Medford Oregon visit, the Class 6 community submitted a single four inch binder. In comparison, Snohomish County, a Class 4 community submitted five binders, four inches thick.
- There are communities in the last recertification period which submitted too much information. As an example, Marlene does not need to see all the inspections records, just a sample.
- Elevation Certificate Post Firm Credit
 - Some communities are having problems accessing elevation certificate by date, which is necessary to extract examples of EC's prior to joining CRS. Many are stored by address or name. A workaround is to have a separate EC file sorted by year. Every EC may not have to be produced but a listing of all EC's on file is requested including addresses.
- 300 Series - Outreach
 - Example of outreach from Twin Falls Idaho
 - An example of the old "golden letter" which contained all the applicable outreach messages formerly scored a 98, now the same letter scores only a 36.
 - Under the new program multiple activities under outreach are required to get maximum credit. As an example, providing information at the counter only receives one point, while attending meetings at the HOA's gets more points.
 - A community can score up to 200 points under outreach without a PPI. A spreadsheet example is on the website.
 - The template has 30 lines. If you do more than 30 projects add an extra line to the spreadsheet to document or fill out another page.
 - With a Program for Public Information-PPI can target more audiences and get a 40 percent bonus if in the PPI and if the stakeholders do the work there is a 30 percent bonus.
 - Snohomish County Washington was one of the first 4 PPI programs in the nation and the only multi jurisdictional PPI. It's been very helpful to post it on the CRS website, <http://crsresources.org>.
- 400 Series – Higher Regulatory Standards

- Freeboard credit has been adjusted in the 2013 manual – to get the max score, utilities and garages have to be elevated or protected to the freeboard level (We used to just worry about the lowest floor).
- 600 Series – Flood Warning and Response
 - Must map the critical facilities in the hazard areas. Need to map levees. For credit, Levees need to be constructed as levees not as road embankments and be owned and managed by a public agency.
 - Outreach to areas affected by flooding or protected by levees is a prerequisite for 620 credit. Messaging must indicated clearly that the areas that are subject to potential flooding.
- Acronym Cross Walk - Hand out supplied by Marlene
 - Bold header indicates maximum points available per activities. However, sub-activities can score more than the total allowed. This allows communities the flexibility to choose which projects have the most value to them and to pursue those activities.
- Mary of Snohomish County provided a debrief on the recent audit/verification
 - Roughly spent \$175,000 to prepare for the audit and verification. The work was done all in house and includes some implementation costs
 - There was difficulty getting information from other departments. You need to be sure that the CRS verification is part of everyone’s work plan. Snohomish County will be examining ways to collect the information more efficiently.
 - Marlene spent three days in the field with staff as part of the verification visit and sends a request for information two months before the first meetings.
 - Post interviews are provided to executive level staff if they chose to participate. The goal is to understand how the program works, how the scoring works and to encourage support to the CRS program at the staff level.

Briefing from National CRS Meeting Last Week in Washington D.C.

By Dave Carlton, Atkins N.A. & French Wetmore, French & Associates.

- NOAA and the following FEMA HQ staff met with the CRS staff
 - Risk Map
 - Mapping
 - Levees/LAMP
 - Public information survey
 - Beach nourishment
 - Dam Safety
 - Planning
 - FloodSmart
 - Building Science
 - ESA
 - Automating Elevation Certificate review

- Biggert/Waters motivating more interest in the CRS program. FEMA looking to increase the number of participants in the CRS program. The program has resulted in \$320 million in premium adjustments.
 - Florida has hired a state coordinator to specifically get more communities to join the CRS program.
- Gina Gabriel – New ISO/CRS Specialist for Southern Idaho, Northern California, Montana and Utah... Marlene will continue to work Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and Northern Idaho.
- Classes still open of CRS program at EMI in 2014. Need to ask Region X again to see if it is possible to have a field deployed class. See this week's NFIP/CRS Update newsletter for training opportunities.
- Beginning in January 2014 ISO has a new contract. The website (<http://crsresources.org>) will provide 20 minute canned topics. Planned webinars in 2014 will be more in-depth and cover topic from:
 - Introduction to CRS
 - 330 Projects – not PPI
 - RISK Map
 - How to prepare for a verification visit (significant difference for a Class 8 vs. Class 4 community)
- Submissions for the verifications can now be in electronic form, prefer a PDF. Submittal can be on a Thumb drive rather than volumes of binders. Send a full size pdf of all maps, do not send shape files. You could also provide direct links to documents on a community's website or instead of providing the actual document. In a PDF try to mark in the document margins which Activity and/or outreach topic is seeking credit. This will significantly reduce your review time and simplify the process.
- ISO will be asking for more documentation supporting activity credits in an effort to show activity is statistically relevant.
- ISO is willing to do a courtesy review of plans, outreach documents etcetera, prior to final submission to determine if the works will apply for credit.
- Uniform Credit – do not assume it is a given.
 - Dam safety, need to be determined to be a high hazard dam (as defined by your state) affecting your community. As an example, Mud Mountain Dam is a high hazard dam for Sumner and Puyallup, but would not be for Orting or the Nisqually area.
- Annual reports on PPIs are required. They must be produced at the time of verification or annual Recertification, but can be completed on the local communities normal update cycle.

NEXT MEETING: March 13, 2014 – Pierce County Public Works Tacoma Mall Plaza Office