



# Federal Emergency Management Agency

Washington, D.C. 20472

October 14, 2009

CERTIFIED MAIL  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
101/155

Steve Walkerman  
Chairperson, Board of Selectmen  
Town of Underhill  
12 Pleasant Valley Road  
Underhill Center, Vermont 05490

Community: Town of Underhill,  
Chittenden County, Vermont  
Community No.: 500042

Dear Mr. Walkerman:

On July 9, 2009, the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided your community with Preliminary copies of a Flood Insurance Study (FIS) report and Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). The FIS report and FIRM for your community were prepared in our countywide format, which means that flood hazard information for the entire geographic area of the county, including your community and all jurisdictions, was presented. This information makes it appropriate to modify the elevations of the flood having a 1-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (base flood) for certain locations in the Town of Underhill, Chittenden County, Vermont (All Jurisdictions). Public notification by way of a Standard Newspaper Notice that the proposed modifications in Base Flood Elevations (BFEs) are posted in the BFE Notice for Studies on the FEMA Website <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/fhm/bfe> will be given in the *Seven Days Newspaper* on or about October 21, 2009, and October 28, 2009; the *Burlington Free Press, Williston Observer*, and *Essex Reporter* on or about October 22, 2009, and October 29, 2009. The BFEs for the flooding sources are listed in the table at the end of the BFE Notice for Studies. Also, the proposed BFE determinations can be obtained by calling the FEMA Map Assistance Center toll free at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627). A copy of the Standard Newspaper Notice and a copy of the Notice of Proposed Flood Elevation Determinations published in the *Federal Register*, on September 8, 2009 at Part 67, Volume 74, Page 46078 and 46079 are enclosed for your information.

These proposed BFEs, if finalized, will become the basis for the floodplain management measures that your community must adopt or show evidence of having in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). However, before any revised BFEs are effective for floodplain management purposes, you will be provided an opportunity to appeal the proposed BFEs.

Section 110 of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-234) is intended to ensure an equitable balancing of all interests involved in the setting of BFE determinations. The legislation provides for an explicit process of notification and appeals for your community and for private persons prior to this office making the BFE determinations final. The appeal procedure is outlined below for your information. The regulations FEMA developed to implement Section 110 are listed in Title 44, Chapter I, Part 67, Code of Federal Regulations. A copy of the NFIP regulations is enclosed.

During the 90-day appeal period following the second publication in the referenced newspaper, any owner or lessee of real property in your community who believes his or her property rights will be adversely affected by the BFE determinations may appeal to you, or to an agency that you publicly designate. You must send copies of the individual appeals to the FEMA Region as soon as you receive them. Note that the 90-day appeal period is statutory and cannot be extended or shortened for any reason. It is important to know, however, that the sole basis for the appeals is having knowledge or information indicating that the proposed BFE determinations are scientifically or technically incorrect. However, inquiries regarding data other than the proposed BFE determinations (e.g., incorrect street names, typographical errors, omissions) will be considered as comments and not appeals. Any applicable changes will be made before the revised FIS report and FIRM become effective.

During the appeal period, private citizens who want to appeal should present to you the scientific or technical data intended to negate or contradict FEMA's findings in any form, as you specify. FEMA requests that you review and consolidate all appeals by private persons, and issue a written opinion stating whether the evidence presented is sufficient to justify an official appeal by your community on behalf of such persons. Your decision on whether an appeal by the community in its own name will be made must be sent to this office within the 90-day appeal period and at the same time a copy must be sent to the following individual:

Timothy S. Hillier, P.E., CFM  
50 Hampshire Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Any documents submitted to you without evidence that they were sent within 90 days of the second publication in the local newspaper will be considered comments. Your community may find it appropriate to call further attention to the proposed BFE determinations and to the appeal procedure by using a press release or other public notice.

If the FEMA Region does not receive an appeal from your community on behalf of individuals within the 90 days provided, FEMA shall consolidate and review on their own merits the individual appeals, which you have on file and forwarded to us. FEMA's final decision will be in writing, and copies will be sent to each individual appellant and the State coordinating agency.

The appeal resolution process will consider any scientific or technical data submitted by your community intended to negate or contradict the information upon which the proposed BFE determinations are based. The appeal will be resolved by consultation with officials of the local government involved, an administrative hearing, or submission of the conflicting data to an independent scientific body or appropriate Federal agency for a determination. FEMA will determine the method for resolution.

If your community cannot submit scientific or technical data before the end of the 90-day appeal period, you may nevertheless submit data at any time as specified in Part 65 of the NFIP Regulations. If warranted, FEMA will revise the FIRM again after the effective date.

The reports and other information used for the final determination will be made available for public inspection. Until the conflict of data is resolved and the FIRM becomes effective, flood insurance available within your community shall continue to be available in accordance with the effective FIRM dated June 15, 1988.

If warranted by substantive changes, during the appeal period, FEMA will send to you revised copies of the FIS report and FIRM. At the end of the 90-day appeal period and following the resolution of any appeals, FEMA will send you a letter of final BFE determinations.

The FIRM panels for Chittenden County, Vermont (All Jurisdictions) have been computer-generated. Once the FIS report and FIRM are printed and distributed, the digital files containing the flood hazard data for the entire county can be provided to your community for use in a computer mapping system. In the mean time, if you have any questions about the digital files please contact Timothy S. Hillier, P.E., CFM, 50 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139, the designated mapping partner for preparing digital mapping files. These files can be used in conjunction with other thematic data for purposes of floodplain management, insurance determinations, and many other planning applications. In addition, your community may be eligible for additional credits under the NFIP Community Rating System if you implement your activities using digital mapping files.

If you have any questions regarding the proposed BFE determinations, revised FIS report, or revised FIRM for your community, please contact the FEMA Map Assistance Center, toll free, at 1-877-FEMA MAP (1-877-336-2627).

Sincerely,



Kevin C. Long, Acting Chief  
Engineering Management Branch  
Mitigation Directorate

Enclosures:

- 1) Newspaper Notice
- 2) BFE Determination Notice to be published on FEMA's Web site
- 3) National Flood Insurance Program Regulations
- 4) Federal Register Publication

cc: Community Map Repository  
Kari Papelbon, Zoning Administrator, Town of Underhill