

HAMPTON ROADS REGIONAL CRS WORKGROUP



WORKING TOGETHER TOWARDS A STRONGER VIRGINIA

Date

INSERT ADDRESSES HERE

OF ALL RELEVANT LOCALITIES AND SEND A MULTIPLE ADDRESSEE LETTER TO THE RELEVANT LOCALITIES; SEND IT C/O THE COUNTY MANAGER OR PLANNER; I.E., NOT TO AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

To Whom It May Concern:

The Hampton Roads Regional Community Rating System (CRS) Workgroup is a collaboration of floodplain professionals from all levels of government, private businesses, academia, and non-profits in the Hampton Roads and surrounding regions working to improve floodplain management in our communities. It has recently concluded an examination of a recommendation regarding the Limit of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA) line proposed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Flooding is a frequent and costly disaster faced by many localities. To ensure that Virginia localities have the most up to date information related to flood risks, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is issuing new Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). One of the biggest changes on the new FIRMs is the inclusion of a Coastal A zone, where wave heights are anticipated to be between 1.5 and 3 feet during a 1% annual chance storm event.

The Coastal A zone is shown on the FIRMs through the use of a Limit of Moderate Wave Action (LiMWA) line. While it is not currently mandated, FEMA highly recommends that coastal communities adopt V Zone standards in the Coastal A zone. The Hampton Roads CRS Workgroup has studied the implications of adopting V zone standards in the Coastal A zone, and has concluded that the recommendation made by FEMA has merit.

We would like to offer the following for your information:

- The American Institutes for Research recommends that the National Flood Insurance Program should mandate V Zone design and construction practices in Coastal A zones in their 2006 Evaluation of the National Flood Insurance Program's Building Standards.
- The American Society of Civil Engineers Standard 24-05 requires foundation systems in Coastal A zones meet V Zone design standards.
- The International Code Council's 2015 International Codes requires the use of V Zone standards in Coastal A zones.
- Many foundation failures during Hurricanes Katrina, Isaac, and Sandy were the result of excessive scour from wave action on solid foundation types (crawl and slab). Open foundations, such as piles or columns, performed better than solid wall foundations where waves or water moved at apparently high velocities. Solid wall foundations are not permitted in the V Zone.
- While communities that participate in the Community Rating System are not required to adopt V zone standards in Coastal A zones, they are required to show the LiMWA line on their FIRMs as a prerequisite of participation in the program.
- The adoption of V Zone standards in Coastal A zones is an eligible activity to receive points under the Community Rating System, and can help communities achieve the next CRS class, resulting in further discounts for residents.

Based on this and other relevant information, it is the opinion of the Workgroup that localities in the Hampton Roads region should consider the adoption of the LiMWA line as recommended by FEMA.

If it would be of value for the Workgroup to provide you with additional information regarding the FEMA recommendation or our conclusions, please contact Kenneth Somerset at 757-868-3035 or Kensomerset1@hotmail.com.

Respectfully,

Kenneth M. Somerset

Chairperson,

Hampton Roads Regional CRS Workgroup Members