

## Become an informed citizen!

If you live near a major river or other body of water, there is a good chance that a levee may be nearby. Here are some ways you can check to see whether you live behind a levee:

Start with local city engineering departments:

1. Where are nearby levees located?
2. What areas in my community are served by levees?
3. What size of flood are the levees designed to control?
4. What areas are most likely to flood if a levee is overtopped or breached?
5. What is the condition of the levees?
6. How well have the levees performed during previous floods?
7. What plans are in place to ensure that any levee operations proceed smoothly during a flood?
8. What is the elevation of my home relative to the potential flooding from a levee failure?
9. How would my neighborhood and nearby areas likely be affected under different flood scenarios?
10. How much time would I likely have to evacuate in the event of a disaster?
11. What are my safe evacuation routes?

## Helpful Websites

<http://www.swt.usace.army.mil>, <http://www.swg.usace.army.mil>  
<http://www.swf.usace.army.mil>, <http://www.swl.usace.army.mil>

US Army Corps National Levee Safety Web page  
<http://www.usace.army.mil/LeveeSafety/>

Everyone is at Risk - Find Out How to Protect Your Home & Your Family!  
<http://www.floodsmart.gov>

FEMA for information on flooding mapping and flood insurance:  
<http://www.msc.fema.gov> or <http://www.fema.gov>

The National Flood Insurance Program's "Community Rating System" is a voluntary 18-step program that communities can undertake to reduce the cost of flood insurance and better prepare for flooding. For more information, see [www.fema.gov/business/nfip/crs.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/business/nfip/crs.shtm).

American Society of Civil Engineers Levee Guide  
<http://content.asce.org/ASCELeveeGuide.html>

National Committee on Levee Safety: <http://www.nfrmp.us/ncls/>

Association of State Floodplain Managers: <http://www.floods.org/>

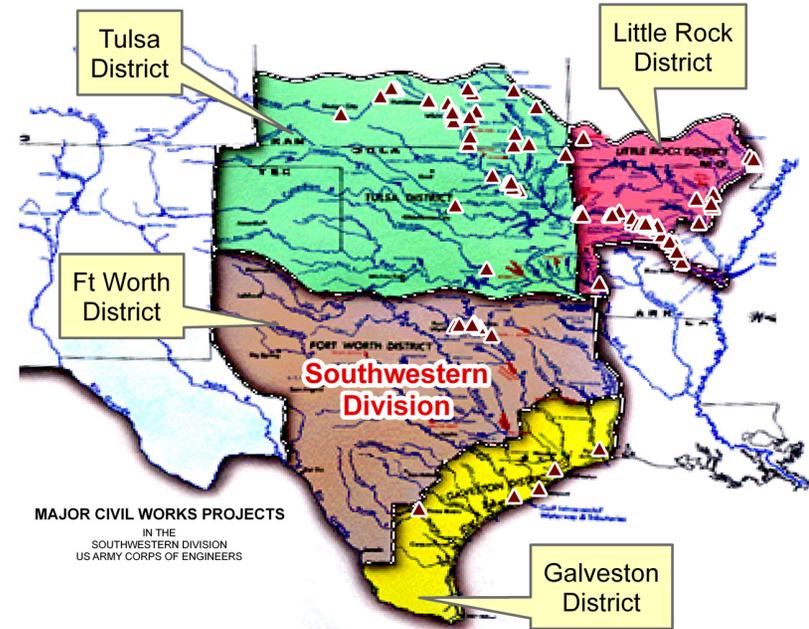
NOAA National Flood Outlook  
<http://www.hpc.ncep.noaa.gov/nationalfloodoutlook/>

Emergency Preparation: <http://www.ready.gov>



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**®

## What You Need to Know About Your Levees



## Purpose of the US Army Corps Levee Safety Program

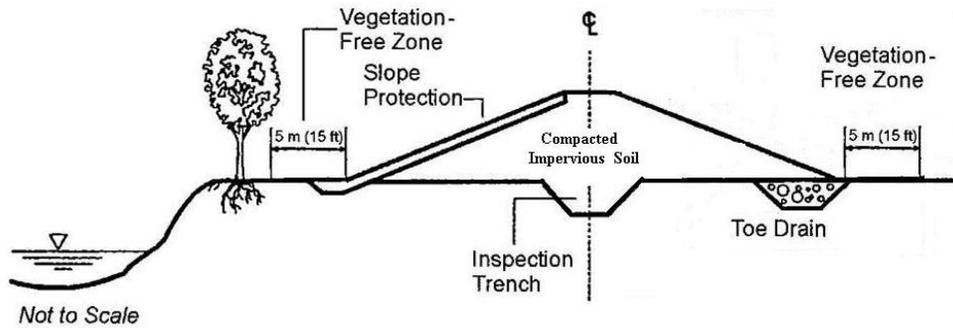
In 2006 USACE created its Levee Safety Program to assess the integrity and viability of levees and to make sure that levee systems do not present unacceptable risks to the public, property and environment. The basic objectives of the USACE Levee Safety Program are to:

Develop balanced and informed assessments of levees within the program;

Evaluate, prioritize and justify levee safety decisions, and

Make recommendations to operators to improve public safety associated with levee systems.

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### What is a levee?

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency defines a levee as a “man-made structure, usually an earthen embankment, designed and constructed in accordance with sound engineering practices to contain, control, or divert the flow of water so as to provide protection from temporary flooding.” Levees are sometimes referred to as dikes.

### You should know

Levees DO NOT eliminate flood risk. The possibility exists they can be overtopped or breached by a larger event.

USACE recommends property owners behind levees purchase flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program, regardless of level of protection or the FEMA status of the levee.

The “100 year flood” or more accurately, the 1% chance of flooding in any given year, isn’t a safety standard for levees. It was established as a minimum requirement for flood insurance.

More than 20,000 communities participate in the NFIP.

Approximately 25% of the counties FEMA has mapped contain levees.

A 1% annual-chance flood equates to a 26% chance of flooding within a 30 year mortgage.

Flood risk is dynamic and changes over time.

### Program facts

The geographic boundary encompassed by the Southwestern Division includes all of Oklahoma and parts of southern Kansas, part of Arkansas and most of Texas. There is a total of 957 miles of levees incorporated into the Division’s Levee Safety Program. Of that total:

Galveston District has three (3) hurricane protection systems on the Texas coast and local flood protection for a total of 118 miles of levee

Fort Worth District has 162 miles of levee protecting cities and agricultural land

Little Rock District has 427 miles of levee protecting cities and agricultural land

Tulsa District has 250 miles of levee protecting cities and agricultural land

### Know your risk from flooding

#### FEMA’s National Flood Insurance Program

The Federal Emergency Management Agency administers the National Flood Insurance Program and provides flood hazard information to communities nationwide in the form of Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Communities use this information for land-use planning, floodplain management, and flood insurance rating purposes.

A community that desires a levee be recognized or “accredited” on a FIRM as excluding the FEMA base flood from a defined area, must submit to FEMA documentation demonstrating that the levee meets the requirements outlined



in Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 65.10 (44 CFR 65.10), Mapping Areas Protected by Levee Systems.

The FEMA base flood is also known as the 100 year or 1 percent annual-chance flood.

