



GUADALUPE COUNTY, TEXAS ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Flood Awareness Newsletter September 2014

Floodplains Explained

One way to define floods is by their likelihood, or probability of happening each year. For example, a person living on the edge of the 100-year floodplain has a 1 percent chance of flooding every year. The risk for flooding increases as he or she moves closer to the stream centerline and deeper into the 100-year floodplain. Over thousands of years, a 100-year flood occurs, on average, once every 100 years. A 500-year flood has a 0.2 percent chance of happening every year.

It is important to note that floodplains, as defined on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate

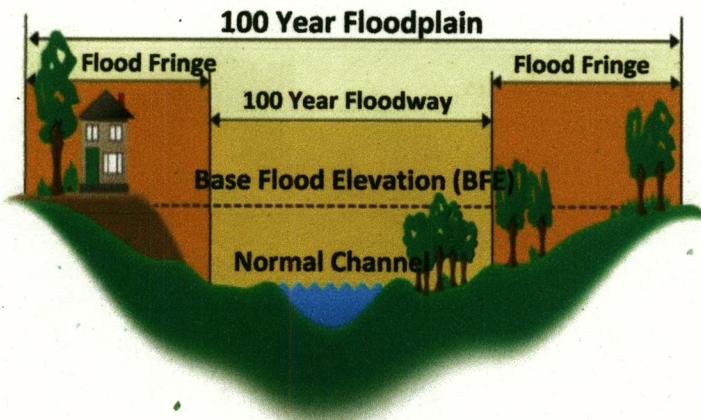
Maps show flooding from the 100-year and 500-year floods when our ephemeral streams or washes experience significant rainfall in their upstream watershed. The maps do not take into account flooding from local sources such as roadside ditches or storm sewers. In addition to this, FEMA's maps do not show areas susceptible to flooding from more frequent storm events, such as

Terminology

Ephemeral Stream - A stream that flows only briefly during and following a period of rainfall in the immediate locality.

Watershed - The area of land that includes a particular stream and all the rivers, streams, etc., that flow into it.

Characteristics of a floodplain



Flood Safety: Don't Cross Flooded Roadways

We're sure you've heard the phrase "Turn around. Don't Drown." before and in Guadalupe County this couldn't be more appropriate. Did you know that eighteen percent of flood fatalities in the US in 2012 occurred when people walked into flooded areas. Forty percent of flood related deaths occurred when people drove their vehicles into flooded streets. The danger is not always obvious, but the risk of crossing a flooded roadway is clear. It only takes six inches of flow water to knock over an adult and cause the loss of control of a vehicle. A foot of water can cause many vehicles to float and only two feet of water can carry a vehicle away.

GUADALUPE COUNTY
Environmental Health

Main office:
2605 N Guadalupe St.
Seguin, TX 78155
P: 830-303-8858
F: 830-372-3961

Shelly Coleman, CFM
Director

Melissa Zwicke, CFM

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