

## FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

You are receiving this flyer because the location of your property is within the Special Flood Hazard Areas designated by FEMA and may be subject to flooding. Flooding does occur in certain areas of our city. These areas are along Lou Emma Creek in the north part of the city and Town Branch and Flat Rock Creek in the south part of the city. These creeks can leave their banks during heavy storms and caused localized flooding. Flooding in all three areas can come with little warning and can cause flooding within an hour after a thunderstorm begins. Floodwaters can be dangerous. Even though they appear to move slowly (three feet per second), a flood two feet deep can knock a man off his feet and float a car. Your property may be high enough that it was not flooded recently.

However, it can still be flooded in the future because the next flood could be worse. Annually the city will see flash flooding throughout various portions of the city, to include areas around Lee Creek, the Arkansas River Basin, and throughout the downtown area. If you are in the floodplain, the odds are that someday your property will be damaged. This flyer gives you some ideas of what you can do to protect yourself. Information on whether your property is in the 100-year floodplain can be obtained by coming into the Van Buren City Offices and having the Building Inspector help you. Maps are available to look at as well as other flood-related information. Van Buren also has Elevation Certificates for new development available. Contact the Van Buren Building Department at (479) 474-8943 for further assistance.

## FLOOD SAFETY

The following common sense guidelines can help you from the dangers of flooding:

- Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in cars than any where else. Do not drive around barriers.
- Do not walk through flowing water. Currents can be deceptive. Six inches of water can knock you off your feet.

## YAN BUREN FLOOD INFORMATION

- Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. If your house is about to be flooded, turn off the power at the service box. Electrical current can travel through water. Electrocution is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death during floods.
- Be alert to gas leaks. Turn off the gas to your house before it floods. If you smell gas, report it to a Village official or your gas company. Do not use candles, lanterns or open flames if you smell gas or are unsure if your gas has been shut off.
- Keep children away from the flood waters, ditches, culverts and storm drains. Flood waters can carry unimaginable items that have dislodged themselves. Culverts may suck smaller people into them rendering them helpless.
- Clean everything that has been wet. Flood water will be contaminated with sewage and other chemicals which pose severe health threats.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their home may seek shelter in yours.
- Do not use gas engines, such as generators, or charcoal fires indoors during power outages. Carbon monoxide exhaust can pose serious health hazards.

## PROPERTY PROTECTION MEASURES

If your property is susceptible to flooding, there are many flood damage reduction measures you can employ.

- Watertight seals can be applied to brick and block walls to protect against low-level flooding.
- Utilities such as heating and air conditioning systems, water heaters and other major appliances can be elevated to higher floors in the structure or

on raised platforms.

- Temporary measures such as moving furniture and other valuables to higher floors or sandbagging exterior openings will also help.
- Elevating or relocating the entire structure may also be a feasible option.

City Flood Services: The first thing you should do is check for local flood hazards. Flood protection references are available at the Van Buren Public Library and the City Building Department office. You can also visit the Building Department in City Hall 1003 Broadway, to see if you are in a mapped floodplain. If so, they can give you more information about problems in your area. Additionally, the Street Department can provide sand bags to help protect your property. The Street Department can be reached by calling 479-471-5009.

## FLOODPLAIN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

All development within the 100-yr. floodplain (not just construction of buildings, but filling, excavation, fences, etc.) is required to obtain a permit. Applications must be made prior to doing any work in a floodplain area. Please contact the City Building Inspector to receive all the information you will need in order to properly develop in the floodplain at (479) 474-8943. You may report any illegal development activities to the above number as well.

## **SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT/DAMAGE**

The NFIP requires that if the cost of improvements to a building or the cost to repair damages (from any cause) to a building exceeds 50% of the market value of the building (excluding land value), the entire building must be brought up to current floodplain management standards. Building improvement projects include exterior and interior remodeling, rehabilitation, additions and repair and reconstruction projects.

Additionally, the cost of currently planned improvements will be added to the cost of previously made improvements and compared to the existing market value to determine if the improvements exceed 50% of the structure's value. Please contact the City Building Inspector at (479) 474-8943 for further information.

## **FLOOD INSURANCE**

If you choose to have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. Flood insurance is only available to those participating communities in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Because of our floodplain management programs that attempt to protect us from the multiple flooding hazards, Van Buren is part of the NFIP and thus, residents are able to obtain flood insurance. Additionally, because the City participates in FEMA's CRS program, flood insurance premiums are discounted.

Be sure to check your policy to ensure you have adequate coverage. Usually these policies cover the building structure, but not the contents. Contents coverage can also be obtained by asking. There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance coverage becomes effective. Plan ahead; do not wait until a flood is predicted before purchasing flood insurance.

If you are building inside the floodplain, the purchase of flood insurance is mandatory if using a federally regulated/insured bank for a loan.

## **NATURAL & BENEFICIAL FUNCTIONS**

Floodplains play a valuable role in providing natural and beneficial functions to the area around, and including, Van Buren. Floodplains that are relatively undisturbed provide a wide range of benefits to both human and natural systems. These benefits provide aesthetic pleasure as well as function to provide active processes such as filtering nutrients. These floodplains enhance waterfowl, fish and other wildlife habitats and provide feeding/breeding grounds. And lastly, these floodplains provide natural erosion control and open space so further flooding damage does not occur. The city contains two lakes, Lake Lou Emma and Lake Cap Bedell, both of which are located within the floodplain containing a combined area of 16 Acres in the Special Flood Hazard Area. The lakes were built to assist with retention of stormwater runoff and recreation for the citizens.

## **DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE**

As simple as it may sound, simply keeping smaller ditches and streams free of debris can dramatically improve the run-off capacity of low-lying areas, as well as greatly reduce the occurrence blockage that significantly contributes to flooding. It is illegal to dump materials into a required waterway and violators may be fined. If you see someone in the act of dumping or see debris in one of our watercourses, please contact the City of Van Buren at (479) 474-8943.

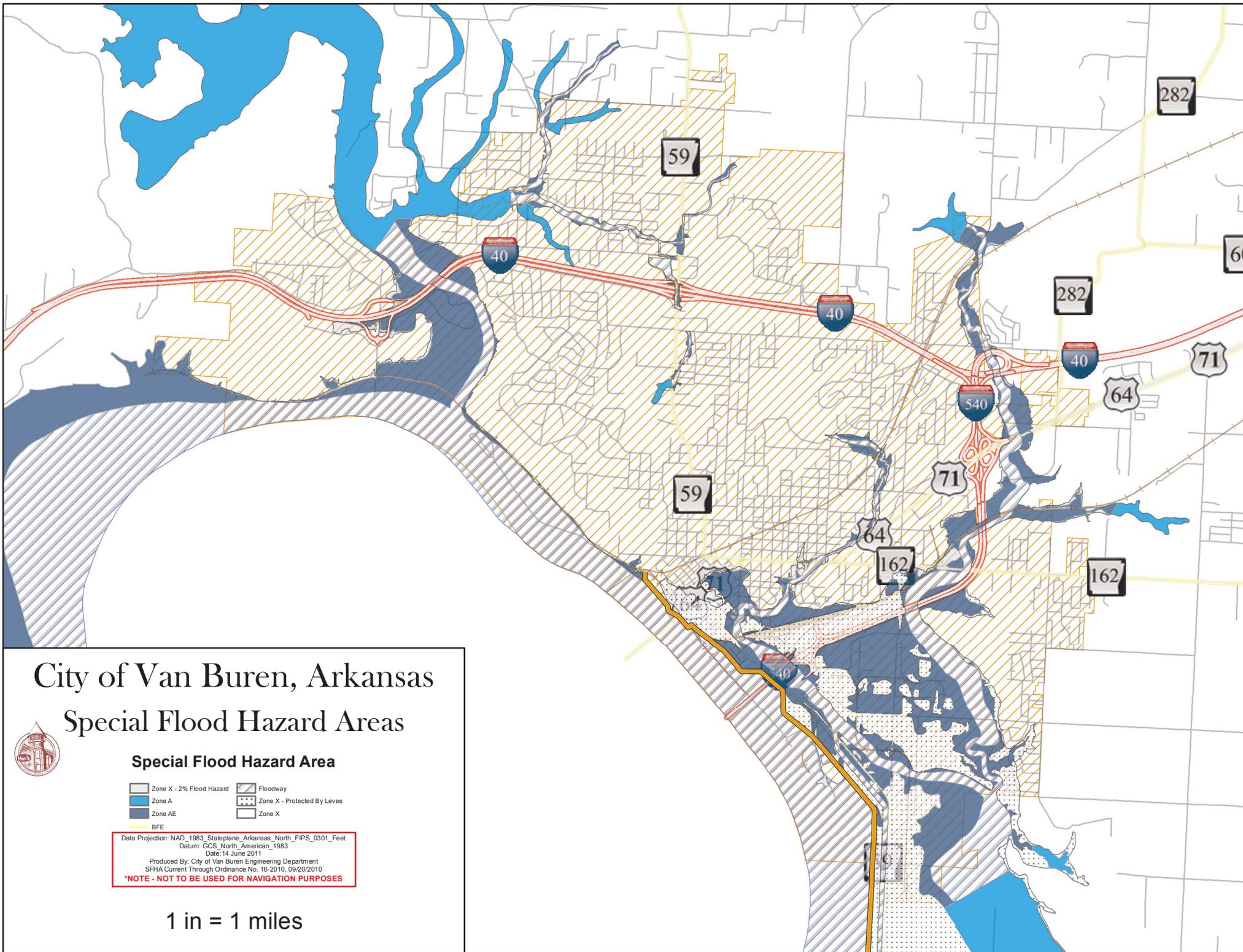
## **FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM**

Many times, flooding along the Arkansas River within Van Buren can be predicted days in advance, giving ample warning for preparation and evacuation. However, in the event of a flash flood due a large rain event, you may be the first to notice the oncoming situation and have only hours to execute your plan. Notify the Van Buren Police/Fire Department. The City's Emergency Alert System will be activated. You will also see regular interruption on local radio and television stations advising you of the situation. In addition, you can turn to local television channels KFMS and KHBS, as well as, radio stations KISR 93.7 and KMAG 99.1 for storm warning information.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you should require further or more detailed information regarding flood-related issues in Van Buren, such as Elevation Certificates and Flood Insurance Rate Maps, here are some additional sources:

- FEMA.gov website
- 1003 Broadway  
Van Buren, AR 72956
- Floodplain page on the [www.vanburencity.org](http://www.vanburencity.org) website.
- Van Buren Public Library



# City of Van Buren, Arkansas

## Special Flood Hazard Areas



### Special Flood Hazard Area

- |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Zone X - 2% Flood Hazard | Floodway                    |
| Zone A                   | Zone X - Protected By Levee |
| Zone AE                  | Zone X                      |
| BFE                      |                             |

Data Projection: NAD\_1983\_Stateplane\_Arkansas\_North\_FIPS\_0301\_Feet  
 Datum: GCS\_North\_American\_1983  
 Date: 14 June 2011  
 Produced By: City of Van Buren Engineering Department  
 SFHA Current Through Ordinance No. 16-2010, 09/20/2010  
**\*NOTE - NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION PURPOSES**

1 in = 1 miles