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Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps To Debut At Open House In Orleans Parish

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NEW ORLEANS, La. -- The public is invited to view newly revised Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs) for Orleans Parish at an open house on Thursday, Aug. 20, 2009. The open house will be from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Berhman Center, 2529 General Meyer Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70114.

Specialists will be on hand at the open house to answer citizens' questions and to provide additional information. Citizens are encouraged to view the maps, which will be available in both digital and paper formats.

The preliminary flood maps were developed as part of the nationwide map modernization effort spearheaded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which administers the National Flood Insurance Program. The new maps are in a digital format, providing greater detail and making it easier for citizens to view the information.

The flood maps will help residents and business owners understand their current flood risk and make more informed decisions about protecting their property. In addition, community planners, local officials, engineers, builders and others will have the tools to make important determinations about how to maximize safety for new structures and developments.

While adoption is voluntary, it is a requirement for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. Final maps will not become effective until adopted by the parish and/or city council. Orleans Parish is not required to adopt the preliminary DFIRMS at this time. Once the federal levees are completed, new maps

will be issued for the parish's review and adoption.

Residents should consult their local floodplain administrator with questions on what flood map or elevations to use during the rebuilding process. Extensive information about the Louisiana Mapping Project (LaMP) and the map adoption process is available online at www.lamappingproject.com. Assistance is also available through the LaMP Call Center, 1-866-751-3989 open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The LaMP Call Center is available for general information on map status, schedules for public meetings, contact information for local officials relative to specific properties, and assistance from FEMA hazard mitigation staff, including National Flood Insurance Plan specialists, engineers, and floodplain management specialists.

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