

October 28, 2008

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James W. Stark
Director, Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office
Federal Emergency Management Agency
1250 Poydras St. Box 43
New Orleans, LA 70113

SUBJECT: Temporary Waiver to FEMA Floodplain Management Policy –
Location of Temporary Housing in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) V Zone

Dear Mr. Stark:

This letter will serve as the State of Louisiana's official request to FEMA seeking a temporary waiver to the Agency's policy of not allowing temporary housing under the Individual Assistance Program to be located in a SFHA V Zone, specifically in communities like Cameron Parish.

FEMA and Cameron Parish held the Community Consultation Officer (CCO) meeting on April 29, 2008, at which time the parish was given their new Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM). Prior to the issuance of these new maps approximately 30% of Cameron Parish was located in a SFHA V Zone. With the issuance of these new maps approximately 83% of the Parish is now located in the V Zone. This has caused a tremendous hardship on Cameron Parish.

Subsequent to the issuance of these maps the Parish was devastated by two back-to-back hurricanes – Gustav and Ike in September, 2008. The devastating effects of these two storms especially impacted individual homeowners. Approximately 400 Cameron Parish homeowners were forced to apply for housing assistance under FEMA's Individual Assistance Program. Unfortunately, they are being denied this assistance because of FEMA's policy of prohibiting housing assistance in a SFHA V Zone.

I strongly urge, on behalf of these homeowners, to issue a temporary waiver to this policy until the Parish adopts the new DFIRMs. This will then allow for much needed humanitarian assistance to reach these needy homeowners.

If you have any further questions regarding this subject, please feel free to contact Mr. D. Casey Levy, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, at 225-267-2673 or email clevy@ohsep.louisiana.gov.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Rainwater

PWR/dcl